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Illustrated Sterling Edition

ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN

OR

THE MAIDEN OF THE MIST

COUNT ROBERT OF PARIS

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

BOSTON
DANA ESTES & COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

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INTRODUCTION TO ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN

THIS novel was written at a time when circumstances did not place within my reach the stores of a library tolerably rich in historical works, and especially the memoirs of the middle ages, amidst which I had been accustomed to pursue the composition of my fictitious narratives. In other words, it was chiefly the work of leisure hours in Edinburgh, not of quiet mornings in the country. In consequence of trusting to a memory strongly tenacious certainly, but not less capricious in its efforts, I have to confess on this occasion more violations of accuracy in historical details than can perhaps be alleged against others of my novels. In truth, often as I have been complimented on the strength of my memory, I have through life been entitled to adopt old Beattie of Meikledale's answer to his parish minister, when eulogizing him with respect to the same faculty. "No, doctor," said the honest border-laird, "I have no command of my memory: it only retains what happens to hit my fancy, and like enough, sir, if you were to preach to me for a couple of hours on end, I might be unable at the close of the discourse to remember one word of it." Perhaps there are few men whose memory serves them with equal fidelity as to many different classes of subjects; but I am sorry to say that, while mine has rarely failed me as to any snatch of verse or trait of character that had once interested my fancy, it has generally been a frail support, not only as to names, and dates, and other minute technicalities of history; but as to many more important things.

I hope this apology will suffice for one mistake which has been pointed out to me by the descendant of one of the persons introduced to this story, and who complains with reason that I have made a peasant deputy of the ancestor of a distinguished and noble family, none of whom ever declined from the high rank to which, as far as my pen trenched on it, I now beg leave to restore them. The name of the person who figures as deputy of Soleure in these pages was always, it seems, as it is now, that of a patrician house. I am reminded by the same correspondent of another slip, prob-

ably of less consequence. The Emperor of the days my novel refers to, though the representative of that Leopold who fell in the great battle of Sempach, never set up any pretensions against the liberties of the gallant Swiss, but, on the contrary, treated with uniform prudence and forbearance such of that nation as had established their independence, and with wise, as well as generous, kindness others who still continued to acknowledge fealty to the imperial crown. Errors of this sort, however trivial, ought never, in my opinion, to be pointed out to an author without meeting with a candid and respectful acknowledgment.

With regard to a general subject of great curiosity and interest, in the eyes at least of all antiquarian students, upon which I heve touched at some length in this narrative, I mean the Vehmic tribunals of Westphalia, a name so awful in men's ears during many centuries, and which, through the genius of Goethe, has again been revived in public fancy with a full share of its ancient terrors, I am bound to state my opinion that a wholly new and most important light has been thrown upon this matter since *Anne of Geierstein* first appeared, by the elaborate researches of my ingenious friend, Mr. Francis Palgrave, whose proof-sheets, containing the passages I allude to, have been kindly forwarded to me, and whose complete work will be before the public ere this Introduction can pass through the press.

In Germany, says this very learned writer, there existed a singular jurisdiction, which claimed a *direct descent from the pagan policy and mystic ritual of the earlier Teutons.*

We learn from the historians of Saxony, that the *freyfeldgericht* [or Free Field Court] of Corbey was, in pagan times, under the supremacy of the priests of the Eresburgh, the temple which contained the Irminsule, or pillar of Irmin. After the conversion of the people, the possessions of the temple were conferred by Louis the Pious upon the abbey which arose upon its site. The court was composed of sixteen persons, who held their offices for life. The senior member presided as the *gerefa* or *graff;* the junior performed the humbler duties of *frohner*, or summoner; the remaining fourteen acted as the *échevins*, and by them all judgments were pronounced or declared. When any one of these died, a new member was elected by the priests, from amongst the twenty-two septs or families inhabiting the *gau* or district, and who included all the hereditary occupants of the soil. Afterwards, the selection was made by the monks, but always with the assent of the graff and of the frohner.

The seat of judgment, the king's seat, or *königsstuhl*, was always established on the greensward; and we collect from the context, that the tribunal was also raised or appointed in the common fields of the gau, for the purpose of deciding disputes relating to the land

within its precinct. Such a "king's seat" was a plot sixteen feet in length and sixteen feet in breadth; and when the ground was first consecrated, the frohner dug a grave in the center, in which each of the free échevins threw a handful of ashes, a coal, and a tile. If any doubt arose whether a place of judgment had been duly hallowed, the judges sought for the tokens. If they were not found, then all the judgments which had been given became null and void. It was also of the very essence of the court, that it should be held beneath the sky, and by the light of the sun. All the ancient Teutonic judicial assemblies were held in the open air; but some relic of solar worship may perhaps be traced in the usage and in the language of this tribunal. The forms adopted in the Free Field Court also betray a singular affinity to the doctrines of the British bards respecting their *gorseddau*, or conventions, which were "always held in the open air, in the eye of the light, and in face of the sun." *

When a criminal was to be judged, or a cause to be decided, the graff and the free échevins assembled around the königsstuhl; and the frohner, having proclaimed silence, opened the proceedings by reciting the following rhymes:

Sir graff, with permission,
I beg you to say,
According to law, and without delay,
If I, your knave,
Who judgment crave,
With your good grace,
Upon the king's seat this seat may place.

To this address the graff replied:

While the sun shines with even light
Upon masters and knaves, I shall declare
The law of might, according to right.
Place the king's seat true and square,
Let even measure, for justice's sake,
Be given in sight of God and man,
That the plaintiff his complaint may make,
And the defendant answer,—if he can.

In conformity to this permission, the frohner placed the seat of judgment in the middle of the plot, and then he spake for the second time:

Sir graff, master brave,
I remind you of your honor, here,
And moreover that I am your knave;
Tell me, therefore, for law sincere,
If these mete-wands are even and sure,
Fit for the rich and fit for the poor,
Both to measure land and condition;
Tell me as you would eschew perdition.

---

* Owen Pugh's *Elegies of Lewarch Hen*, Prof., p. 46. The place of these meetings was set apart by forming a circle of stones round the *maen Gorsedd*, or stone of the Gorsedd.

And so speaking, he laid the mete-wand on the ground. The graff then began to try the measure, by placing his right foot against the wand, and he was followed by the other free échevins in rank and order, according to seniority. The length of the mete-wand being thus proved, the frohner spake for the third time:

> Sir graff, I ask by permission.
> If I, with your mete-wand may mete
> Openly, and without displeasure,
> Here the king's free judgment seat?

And the graff replied:

> I permit right,
> And I forbid wrong,
> Under the pains and penalties
> That to the old known laws belong.

Now was the time of measuring the mystic plot; it was measured by the mete-wand along and athwart, and when the dimensions were found to be true, the graff placed himself in the seat of judgment, and gave the charge to the assembled free échevins, warning them to pronounce judgment according to right and justice.

> On this day, with common consent,
> And under the clear firmament,
> A free field court is established here,
> In the open eye of day;
> Enter soberly, ye who may.
> The seat in its place is pight,
> The mete-wand is found to be right;
> Declare your judgments without delay:
> And let the doom be truly given,
> Whilst yet the sun shines bright in heaven.

Judgment was given by the free échevins according to plurality of voices.

After observing that the Author of *Anne of Geierstein* had, by what he calls a "very excusable poetical license," transferred something of these judicial rhymes from the Free Field Court of the abbey of Corbey to the free Vehmic tribunals of Westphalia, Mr. Palgrave proceeds to correct many vulgar errors, in which the novel he remarks on no doubt had shared, with respect to the actual constitution of those last named courts. "The protocols of their proceedings," he says, "do not altogether realize the popular idea of their terrors and tyranny." It may be allowed to me to question whether the mere protocols of such tribunals are quite enough to annul all the import of tradition respecting them; but in the following details there is no doubt much that will instruct the antiquarian, as well as amuse the popular reader:—

The court, says Mr. Palgrave, was held with known and notorious publicity beneath the "eye of light;" and the sentences, though speedy and severe, were founded upon a regular system of established jurisprudence, not so strange, even to England, as it may at first sight appear.

Westphalia, according to its ancient constitution, was divided into districts called *freygraffschafften*, each of which usually contained one and sometimes many, Vehmic tribunals, whose boundaries were accurately defined. The right of the *stuhlherr*, or lord, was of a feudal nature, and could be transferred by the ordinary modes of alienation; and if the lord did not choose to act in his own person, he nominated a *freigraff* to execute the office in his stead. The court itself was composed of *freyschöppfen*, *scabini*, or *échevins*, nominated by the graff, and who were divided into two classes: the ordinary and the *wissenden* or "witan," who were admitted under a strict and singular bond of secrecy.

The initiation of these, the participators in all the mysteries of the tribunal, could only take place upon the "red earth," or within the limits of the ancient duchy of Westphalia. Bareheaded and ungirt, the candidate is conducted before the dread tribunal. He is interrogated as to his qualifications, or rather as to the absence of any disqualification. He must be free born, a Teuton, and clear of any accusation cognizable by the tribunal of which he is to become a member. If the answers are satisfactory, he then takes the oath, swearing by the Holy Law that he will conceal the secrets of the Holy Vehme from wife and child, from father and mother, from sister and brother, from fire and water, from every creature upon which the sun shines, or upon which the rain falls, from every being between earth and heaven.

Another clause relates to his active duties. He further swears, that he will "say forth" to the tribunal all crimes or offenses which fall beneath the secret ban of the Emperor, which he knows to be true, or which he has heard from trustworthy report; and that he will not forbear to do so, for love nor for loathing, for gold nor for silver nor precious stones. This oath being imposed upon him, the new freischopff was then intrusted with the secrets of the Vehmic tribunal. He received the password by which he was to know his fellows, and the grip or sign by which they recognized each other in silence; and he was warned of the terrible punishment awaiting the perjured brother.—If he discloses the secrets of the court, he is to expect that he will be suddenly seized by the ministers of vengeance. His eyes are bound, he is cast down on the soil, his tongue is torn out through the back of his neck, and he is then to be hanged seven times higher than any other criminal. And, whether restrained by the fear of punishment or by the stronger ties of mystery, no instance was ever known of any violation of the secrets of the tribunal.

Thus connected by an invisible bond, the members of the Holy Vehme became extremely numerous. In the 14th century, the league contained upwards of one hundred thousand members. Persons of every rank sought to be associated to this powerful community, and to participate in the immunities which the brethren possessed. Princes were eager to allow their ministers to become the members of this mysterious and holy alliance; and the cities

of the Empire were equally anxious to enroll their magistrates in the Vehmic union.

The supreme government of the Vehmic tribunals was vested in the great or general chapter, composed of the freegraves and all the other initiated members, high and low. Over this assembly the Emperor might preside in person, but more usually by his deputy, the stadtholder of the ancient duchy of Westphalia—an office which, after the fall of Henry the Lion, Duke of Brunswick [Saxony], was annexed to the archbishopric of Cologne.

Before the general chapter, all the members were liable to account for their acts. And it appears that the freegraves reported the proceedings which had taken place within their jurisdictions in the course of the year. Unworthy members were expelled, or sustained a severer punishment. Statutes, or "reformations" as they were called, were here enacted for the regulation of the courts, and the amendment of any abuses; and new and unforeseen cases, for which the existing laws did not provide a remedy, received their determination in the Vehmic Parliament.

As the échevins were of two classes, uninitiated and initiated, so the Vehmic courts had also a twofold character: the *offenbare ding* was an open court or folkmoot; but the *heimliche acht* was the far-famed secret tribunal.

The first was held three times in each year. According to the ancient Teutonic usage, it usually assembled on Tuesday, anciently called *dingstag* or court-day, as well as *diensttag*, or serving-day, the first open or working day after the two great weekly festivals of sun-day and moon-day. Here all the householders of the district, whether free or bond, attended as suitors. The offenbare ding exercised a civil jurisdiction; and in this folkmoot appeared any complainant or appellant who sought to obtain the aid of the Vehmic tribunal in those cases when it did not possess that summary jurisdiction from which it has obtained such fearful celebrity. Here also the suitors of the district made presentments or *wroge*, as they are termed, of any offenses committed within their knowledge, and which were to be punished by the graff and échevins.

The criminal jurisdiction of the Vehmic tribunal took the widest range. The Vehme could punish mere slander and contumely. Any violation of the Ten Commandments was to be restrained by the échevins. Secret crimes, not to be proved by the ordinary testimony of witnesses, such as magic, witchcraft, and poison, were particularly to be restrained by the Vehmic judges; and they sometimes designated their jurisdiction as comprehending every offense against the honor of man or the precepts of religion. Such a definition, if definition it can be called, evidently allowed them to bring every action of which an individual might complain within the scope of their tribunals. The forcible usurpation of land became an offense against the Vehme. And if the property of an humble individual was occupied by the proud burghers of the Hanse, the power of the defendants might afford a reasonable excuse for the interference of the Vehmic power.

The échevins, as conservators of the ban of the Empire, were bound to make constant circuits within their districts, by night and by day. If they could apprehend a thief, a murderer, or the perpetrator of any other heinous crime in possession of the *mainour*, or in the very act, or if his own mouth confessed the deed, they

hung him upon the next tree. But to render this execution legal, the following requisites were necessary: fresh suit, or the apprehension and execution of the offender before daybreak or nightfall; the visible evidence of the crime; and lastly, that three échevins, at least, should seize the offender, testify against him, and judge of the recent deed.

If, without any certain accuser, and without the indication of crime, an individual was strongly and vehemently suspected, or when the nature of the offense was such as that its proof could only rest upon opinion and presumption, the offender then became subject to what the German jurists term the inquisitorial proceeding: it became the duty of the échevin to denounce the *leumund*, or manifest evil fame to the secret tribunal. If the échevins and the freygraff were satisfied with the presentment either from their own knowledge or from the information of their compeer, the offender was said to be *verfämbt*—his life was forfeited; and wherever he was found by the brethren of the tribunal, they executed him without the slightest delay or mercy. An offender who had escaped from the échevins was liable to the same punishment; and such also was the doom of the party who, after having been summoned pursuant to an appeal preferred in open court, made default in appearing. But one of the wissenden was in no respect liable to the summary process or to the inquisitorial proceeding, unless he had revealed the secrets of the court. He was presumed to be a true man; and if accused upon vehement suspicion, or leumund, the same presumption or evil repute which was fatal to the uninitiated might be entirely rebutted by the compurgatory oath of the free échevin. If a party, accused by appeal, did not shun investigation, he appeared in the open court, and defended himself according to the ordinary rules of law. If he absconded, or if the evidence or presumptions were against him, the accusation then came before the judges of the secret court, who pronounced the doom. The accusatorial process, as it was termed, was also, in many cases, brought in the first instance before the heimliche acht. Proceeding upon the examination of witnesses, it possessed no peculiar character, and its forms were those of the ordinary courts of justice. It was only in this manner that one of the wissenden or witan could be tried; and the privilege of being exempted from the summary process, or from the effects of the leumund, appears to have been one of the reasons which induced so many of those who did not tread the "red earth" to seek to be included in the Vehmic bond.

There was no mystery in the assembly of the heimliche acht. Under the oak, or under the lime-tree, the judges assembled in broad daylight, and before the eye of heaven; but the tribunal derived its name from the precautions which were taken for the purpose of preventing any disclosure of its proceedings which might enable the offender to escape the vengeance of the Vehme. Hence the fearful oath of secrecy which bound the échevins. And if any stranger was found present in the court, the unlucky intruder instantly forfeited his life as a punishment for his temerity. If the presentment or denunciation did chance to become known to the offender, the law allowed him a right of appeal. But the permission was of very little utility, it was a profitless boon, for the Vehmic judges always labored to conceal the judgment from

the hapless criminal, who seldom was aware of his sentence until his neck was encircled by the halter.

Charlemagne, according to the traditions of Westphalia, was the founder of the Vehmic tribunal; and it was supposed that he instituted the court for the purpose of coercing the Saxons, ever ready to relapse into the idolatry from which they had been reclaimed, not by persuasion, but by the sword. This opinion, however, is not confirmed either by documentary evidence or by contemporary historians. And if we examine the proceedings of the Vehmic tribunal, we shall see that, in principle, it differs in no essential character from the summary jurisdiction exercised in the townships and hundreds of Anglo-Saxon England. Amongst us, the thief or the robber was equally liable to summary punishment, if apprehended by the men of the township; and the same rules disqualified them from proceeding to summary execution. An English outlaw was exactly in the situation of him who had escaped from the hands of the échevins, or who had failed to appear before the Vehmic court: he was condemned unheard, nor was he confronted with his accusers. The inquisitorial proceedings, as they are termed by the German jurists, are identical with our ancient presentments. Presumptions are substituted for proofs, and general opinion holds the place of a responsible accuser. He who was untrue to all the people in the Saxon age, or liable to the malecredence of the inquest at a subsequent period, was scarcely more fortunate than he who was branded as leumund by the Vehmic law.

In cases of open delict and of outlawry, there was substantially no difference whatever between the English and the Vehmic proceedings. But in the inquisitorial process, the delinquent was allowed, according to our older code, to run the risk of the ordeal. He was accused by or before the hundred, or the thanes of the wapentake; and his own oath cleared him, if a true man; but he "bore the iron" if unable to avail himself of the credit derived from a good and fair reputation. The same course may have been originally adopted in Westphalia; for the wissend, when accused, could exculpate himself by his compurgatory oath, being presumed to be of good fame; and it is, therefore, probable that an uninitiated offender, standing a stage lower in character and credibility, was allowed the last resort of the ordeal. But when the "judgment of god" was abolished by the decrees of the Church, it did not occur to the Vehmic judges to put the offender upon his second trial by the visne, which now forms the distinguishing characteristic of the English law, and he was at once considered as condemned. The heimliche acht is a presentment not traversable by the offender.

The Vehmic tribunals can only be considered as the original jurisdictions of the Old Saxons, which survived the subjugation of their country. The singular and mystic forms of initiation, the system of enigmatical phrases, the use of the signs and symbols of recognition, may probably be ascribed to the period when the whole system was united to the worship of the deities of vengeance, and when the sentence was promulgated by the doomsmen, assembled, like the Asi of old, before the altars of Thor or Woden. Of this connection with ancient pagan policy, so clearly to be traced in the Icelandic courts, the English territorial jurisdictions offer some very faint vestiges;

but the mystery had long been dispersed, and the whole system passed into the ordinary machinery of the law.

As to the Vehmic tribunals, it is acknowledged that, in a truly barbarous age and country, their proceedings, however violent, were not without utility. Their severe and secret vengeance often deterred the rapacity of the noble robber, and protected the humble suppliant; the extent, and even the abuse, of their authority was in some measure justified in an Empire divided into numerous independent jurisdictions, and not subjected to any paramount tribunal, able to administer impartial justice to the oppressed. But as the times improved, the Vehmic tribunals degenerated. The échevins, chosen from the inferior ranks, did not possess any personal consideration. Opposed by the opulent cities of the Hanse, and objects of the suspicion and the enmity of the powerful aristocracy, the tribunals of some districts were abolished by law, and others took the form of ordinary territorial jurisdictions; the greater number fell into desuetude. Yet as late as the middle of the 18th century, a few Vehmic tribunals existed in name, though, as it may be easily supposed, without possessing any remnant of their pristine power.—PALGRAVE *on the Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth: Proofs and Illustrations*, pp. cxliv.-clvii.

I have marked by italic letters the most important passage of the above quotation. The view it contains seems to me to have every appearance of truth and justice; and if such should, on maturer investigation, turn out to be the fact, it will certainly confer no small honor on an English scholar to have discovered the key to a mystery which had long exercised in vain the laborious and profound students of German antiquity.

There are probably several other points on which I ought to have embraced this opportunity of enlarging; but the necessity of preparing for an excursion to foreign countries, in quest of health and strength, that have been for some time sinking, makes me cut short my address upon the present occasion.

Although I had never been in Switzerland, and numerous mistakes must of course have occurred in my attempts to describe the local scenery of that romantic region, I must not conclude without a statement highly gratifying to myself, that the work met with a reception of more than usual cordiality among the descendants of the Alpine heroes whose manners I had ventured to treat of; and I have in particular to express my thanks to the several Swiss gentlemen who have, since the novel was published, enriched my little collection of armor with specimens of the huge weapon that sheared the lances of the Austrian chivalry at Sempach, and was employed with equal success on the bloody days of Granson and Morat. Of the ancient double-handed *espadons* of the Switzer,

I have, in this way, received, I think, not less than six, in excellent preservation, from as many different individuals, who thus testified their general approbation of these pages. They are not the less interesting, that gigantic swords of nearly the same pattern and dimensions were employed, in their conflicts with the bold knights and men-at-arms of England, by Wallace and the sturdy foot-soldiers who, under his guidance, laid the foundations of Scottish independence.

The reader who wishes to examine with attention the historical events of the period which the novel embraces, will find ample means of doing so in the valuable works of Zschokke and M. de Barante—which last author's account of the Dukes of Burgundy is among the most valuable of recent accessions of European literature—and in the new Parisian edition of Froissart, which has not as yet attracted so much attention in this country as it well deserves to do.

W. S.

ABBOTSFORD, *Sept.* 17, 1831.

* [See J. G. Lockhart, *Life of Scott*, vol. ix. pp. 321–323.]

ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN

OR

THE MAIDEN OF THE MIST

CHAPTER I

The mists boil up around the glaciers; clouds
Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphurous,
Like foam from the roused ocean.
. . . . I am giddy.

Manfred.

THE course of four centuries has wellnigh elapsed since the series of events which are related in the following chapters took place on the Continent. The records which contained the outlines of the history, and might be referred to as proof of its veracity, were long preserved in the superb library of the monastery of St. Gall, but perished, with many of the literary treasures of that establishment, when the convent was plundered by the French revolutionary armies. The events are fixed, by historical date, to the middle of the 15th century—that important period when chivalry still shone with a setting ray, soon about to be totally obscured, in some countries by the establishment of free institutions, in others by that of arbitrary power, which alike rendered useless the interference of those self-endowed redressers of wrongs whose only warrant of authority was the sword.

Amid the general light which had recently shone upon Europe, France, Burgundy, and Italy, but more especially Austria, had been made acquainted with the character of a people of whose very existence they had before been scarcely conscious. It is true that the inhabitants of those countries which lie in the vicinity of the Alps, that immense barrier, were not ignorant, that, notwithstanding their rugged and desolate appearance, the secluded valleys which winded among those gigantic mountains nourished a race of hunters and shepherds—men who, living in a state of primeval

simplicity, compelled from the soil a subsistence gained by severe labor, followed the chase over the most savage precipices and through the darkest pine forests, or drove their cattle to spots which afforded them a scanty pasturage, even in the vicinage of eternal snows. But the existence of such a people, or rather of a number of small communities who followed nearly the same poor and hardy course of life, had seemed to the rich and powerful princes in the neighborhood a matter of as little consequence as it is to the stately herds which repose in a fertile meadow that a few half-starved goats find their scanty food among the rocks which overlook their rich domain.

But wonder and attention began to be attracted towards these mountaineers about the middle of the 14th century, when reports were spread abroad of severe contests, in which the German chivalry, endeavoring to suppress insurrections among their Alpine vassals, had sustained repeated and bloody defeats, although having on their side numbers and discipline, and the advantage of the most perfect military equipment then known and confided in. Great was the wonder that cavalry, which made the only efficient part of the feudal armies of these ages, should be routed by men on foot; that warriors sheathed in complete steel should be overpowered by naked peasants who wore no defensive armor, and were irregularly provided with pikes, halberts, and clubs, for the purpose of attack; above all, it seemed a species of miracle that knights and nobles of the highest birth should be defeated by mountaineers and shepherds. But the repeated victories of the Swiss at Laupen, Sempach, and on other less distinguished occasions, plainly intimated that a new principle of civil organization, as well as of military movements, had arisen amid the stormy regions of the Helvetia.

Still, although the decisive victories which obtained liberty for the Swiss cantons, as well as the spirit of resolution and wisdom with which the members of the little confederation had maintained themselves against the utmost exertions of Austria, had spread their fame abroad through all the neighboring countries, and although they themselves were conscious of the character and actual power which repeated victories had acquired for themselves and their country, yet down to the middle of the 15th century, and at a later date, the Swiss retained in a great measure the wisdom, moderation, and simplicity of their ancient manners; so much so, that those who were entrusted with the command of the

troops of the republic in battle were wont to resume the shepherd's staff when they laid down the truncheon, and, like the Roman dictators, to retire to complete equality with their fellow-citizens from the eminence of military command to which their talents, and the call of their country, had raised them.

It is then in the Forest Cantons of Switzerland, in the autumn of 1474, while these districts were in the rude and simple state we have described, that our tale opens.

Two travelers, one considerably past the prime of life, the other probably two or three and twenty years old, had passed the night at the little town of Lucerne, the capital of the Swiss state of the same name, and beautifully situated on the Lake of the Four Cantons. Their dress and character seemed those of merchants of a higher class, and while they themselves journeyed on foot, the character of the country rendering that by far the most easy mode of pursuing their route, a young peasant lad, from the Italian side of the Alps, followed them with a sumpter mule, laden apparently with their wares and baggage, which he sometimes mounted, but more frequently led by the bridle.

The travelers were uncommonly fine-looking men, and seemed connected by some very near relationship—probably that of father and son ; for at the little inn where they lodged on the preceding evening the great deference and respect paid by the younger to the elder had not escaped the observation of the natives, who, like other sequestered beings, were curious in proportion to the limited means of information which they possessed. They observed also that the merchants, under pretense of haste, declined opening their bales or proposing traffic to the inhabitants of Lucerne, alleging in excuse that they had no commodities fitted for the market. The females of the town were the more displeased with the reserve of the mercantile travelers, because they were given to understand that it was occasioned by the wares in which they dealt being too costly to find customers among the Helvetian mountains ; for it had transpired, by means of their attendant, that the strangers had visited Venice, and had there made many purchases of rich commodities, which were brought from India and Egypt to that celebrated emporium, as to the common mart of the Western World, and thence dispersed into all quarters of Europe. Now the Swiss maid

ens had of late made the discovery that gauds and gems were fair to look upon, and, though without the hope of being able to possess themselves of such ornaments, they felt a natural desire to review and handle the rich stores of the merchants, and some displeasure at being prevented from doing so.

It was also observed that, though the strangers were sufficiently courteous in their demeanor, they did not evince tha studious anxiety to please displayed by the traveling peddlers or merchants of Lombardy or Savoy, by whom the inhabitants of the mountains were occasionally visited; and who had been more frequent in their rounds of late years, since the spoils of victory had invested the Swiss with some wealth, and had taught many of them new wants. Those peripatetic traders were civil and assiduous, as their calling required; but the new visitors seemed men who were indifferent to traffic, or at least to such slender gains as could be gathered in Switzerland.

Curiosity was further excited by the circumstance that they spoke to each other in a language which was certainly neither German, Italian, nor French, but from which an old man serving in the cabaret, who had once been as far as Paris, supposed they might be English—a people of whom it was only known in these mountains that they were a fierce insular race, at war with the French for many years, and a large body of whom had long since invaded the Forest Cantons, and sustained such a defeat in the valley of Russwyl as was well remembered by the gray-haired men of Lucerne, who received the tale from their fathers.

The lad who attended the strangers was soon ascertained to be a youth from the Grison country, who acted as their guide, so far as his knowledge of the mountains permitted. He said they designed to go to Bâle, but seemed desirous to travel by circuitous and unfrequented routes. The circumstances just mentioned increased the general desire to know more of the travelers and of their merchandise. Not a bale, however, was unpacked, and the merchants, leaving Lucerne next morning, resumed their toilsome journey, preferring a circuitous route and bad roads through the peaceful cantons of Switzerland to encountering the exactions and rapine of the robber chivalry of Germany, who, like so many sovereigns, made war each at his own pleasure, and levied tolls and taxes on every one who passed their domains of a mile's breadth, with all the insolence of petty tyranny.

For several hours after leaving Lucerne, the journey of our travelers was successfully prosecuted. The road, though

precipitous and difficult, was rendered interesting by those splendid phenomena which no country exhibits in a more astonishing manner than the mountains of Switzerland, where the rocky pass, the verdant valley, the broad lake, and the rushing torrent, the attributes of other hills as well as these, are interspersed with the magnificent and yet fearful horrors of the glaciers, a feature peculiar to themselves.

It was not an age in which the beauties or grandeur of a landscape made much impression either on the minds of those who traveled through the country or who resided in it. To the latter, the objects, however dignified, were familiar, and associated with daily habits and with daily toil; and the former saw, perhaps, more terror than beauty in the wild region through which they passed, and were rather solicitous to get safe to their night's quarters than to comment on the grandeur of the scenes which lay between them and their place of rest. Yet our merchants, as they proceeded on their journey, could not help being strongly impressed by the character of the scenery around them. Their road lay along the side of the lake, at times level and close on its very margin, at times rising to a great height on the side of the mountain, and winding along the verge of precipices which sunk down to the water as sharp and sheer as the walls of a castle descending upon the ditch which defends it. At other times it traversed spots of milder character —delightful green slopes, and lowly retired valleys, affording both pasturage and arable ground, sometimes watered by small streams, which winded by the hamlet of wooden huts with their fantastic little church and steeple, meandered round the orchard and the mount of vines, and murmuring gently as they flowed, found a quiet passage into the lake.

"That stream, Arthur," said the elder traveler, as with one consent they stopped to gaze on such a scene as I have described, "resembles the life of a good and a happy man."

"And the brook, which hurries itself headlong down yon distant hill, marking its course by a streak of white foam," answered Arthur, "what does that resemble?"

"That of a brave and unfortunate one," replied his father.

"The torrent for me," said Arthur: "a headlong course which no human force can oppose, and then let it be as brief as it is glorious."

"It is a young man's thought," replied his father; "but

I am well aware that it is so rooted in thy heart that nothing but the rude hand of adversity can pluck it up."

"As yet the root clings fast to my heart's strings," said the young man; "and methinks adversity's hand hath had a fair clasp of it."

"You speak, my son, of what you little understand," said his father. "Know that, till the middle of life be passed, men scarce distinguish true prosperity from adversity, or rather they court as the favors of fortune what they should more justly regard as the marks of her displeasure. Look at yonder mountain, which wears on its shaggy brow a diadem of clouds, now raised and now depressed, while the sun glances upon but is unable to dispel it; a child might believe it to be a crown of glory, a man knows it to be the signal of tempest."

Arthur followed the direction of his father's eye to the dark and shadowy eminences of Mount Pilatre [Pilatus].

"Is the mist on yonder wild mountain so ominous, then?" asked the young man.

"Demand of Antonio," said his father; "he will tell you the legend."

The young merchant addressed himself to the Swiss lad who acted as their attendant, desiring to know the name of the gloomy height, which, in that quarter, seems the leviathan of the huge congregation of mountains assembled about Lucerne.

The lad crossed himself devoutly, as he recounted the popular legend, that the wicked Pontius Pilate, Proconsul of Judea, had here found the termination of his impious life; having, after spending years in the recesses of that mountain which bears his name, at length, in remorse, and despair rather than in penitence, plunged into the dismal lake which occupies the summit. Whether water refused to do the executioner's duty upon such a wretch, or whether, his body being drowned, his vexed spirit continued to haunt the place where he committed suicide, Antonio did not pretend to explain. But a form was often, he said, seen to emerge from the gloomy waters, and go through the action of one washing his hands; and when he did so, dark clouds of mist gathered first round the bosom of the Infernal Lake (such it had been styled of old), and then, wrapping the whole upper part of the mountain in darkness, presaged a tempest or hurricane, which was sure to follow in a short space. He added, that the evil spirit was peculiarly exasperated at the audacity of such strangers as ascended the mountain to

gaze at its place of punishment, and that, in consequence, the magistrates of Lucerne had prohibited any one from approaching Mount Pilatre, under severe penalties. Antonio once more crossed himself as he finished his legend ; in which act of devotion he was imitated by his hearers, too good Catholics to entertain any doubt of the truth of the story.

"How the accursed heathen scowls upon us!" said the younger of the merchants, while the cloud darkened and seemed to settle on the brow of Mount Pilatre. "*Vade retro*—be thou defied, sinner!"

A rising wind, rather heard than felt, seemed to groan forth, in the tone of a dying lion, the acceptance of the suffering spirit to the rash challenge of the young Englishman. The mountain was seen to send down its rugged sides thick wreaths of heaving mist, which, rolling through the rugged chasms that seamed the grisly hill, resembled the torrents of rushing lava pouring down from a volcano. The ridgy precipices, which formed the sides of these huge ravines, showed their splintery and rugged edges over the vapor, as if dividing from each other the descending streams of mist which rolled around them. As a strong contrast to this gloomy and threatening scene, the more distant mountain range of Righi shone brilliant with all the hues of an autumnal sun.

While the travelers watched this striking and varied contrast, which resembled an approaching combat betwixt the powers of light and darkness, their guide, in his mixed jargon of Italian and German, exhorted them to make haste on their journey. The village to which he proposed to conduct them, he said, was yet distant, the road bad and difficult to find, and if the Evil One (looking to Mount Pilatre and crossing himself) should send his darkness upon the valley, the path would be both doubtful and dangerous. The travelers, thus admonished, gathered the capes of their cloaks close round their throats, pulled their bonnets resolvedly over their brows, drew the buckle of their broad belts which fastened their mantles, and each with a mountain staff in his hand, well shod with an iron spike, they pursued their journey with unabated strength and undaunted spirit.

With every step the scenes around them appeared to change. Each mountain, as if its firm and immutable form were flexible and varying, altered in appearance, like that of a shadowy apparition, as the position of the strangers relative to them changed with their motions, and as the mist, which continued slowly though constantly to descend, influenced the rugged

aspect of the hills and valleys which it shrouded with its vapory mantle. The nature of their progress, too, never direct, but winding by a narrow path along the sinuosities of the valley, and making many a circuit round precipices and other obstacles which it was impossible to surmount, added to the wild variety of a journey in which at last the travelers totally lost any vague idea which they had previously entertained concerning the direction in which the road led them.

"I would," said the elder, "we had that mystical needle which mariners talk of, that points ever to the north, and enables them to keep their way on the waters, when there is neither cape nor headland, sun, moon, nor stars, nor any mark in heaven or earth, to tell them how to steer."

"It would scarce avail us among these mountains," answered the youth; "for, though that wonderful needle may keep its point to the northern pole-star, when it is on a flat surface like the sea, it is not to be thought it would do so when these huge mountains arise like walls betwixt the steel and the object of its sympathy."

"I fear me," replied the father, "we shall find our guide, who has been growing hourly more stupid since he left his own valley, as useless as you suppose the compass would be among the hills of this wild country. Canst tell, my boy," said he, addressing Antonio in bad Italian, "if we be in the road we purposed?"

"If it please St. Antonio," said the guide, who was obviously too much confused to answer the question directly.

"And that water, half covered with mist, which glimmers through the fog, at the foot of this huge black precipice, is it still a part of the Lake of Lucerne, or have we lighted upon another since we ascended that last hill?"

Antonio could only answer that they ought to be on the Lake of Lucerne still, and that he hoped that what they saw below them was only a winding branch of the same sheet of water. But he could say nothing with certainty.

"Dog of an Italian!" exclaimed the younger traveler, "thou deservest to have thy bones broken, for undertaking a charge which thou art as incapable to perform as thou art to guide us to Heaven!"

"Peace, Arthur," said his father; "if you frighten the lad, he runs off, and we lose the small advantage we might have by his knowledge; if you use your baton, he rewards you with the stab of a knife, for such is the humor of a revengeful Lombard. Either way, you are marred instead of helped. Hark thee hither, my boy," he continued, in his

indifferent Italian, "be not afraid of that hot youngster, whom I will not permit to injure thee; but tell me, if thou canst, the names of the villages by which we are to make our journey to-day?"

The gentle mode in which the elder traveler spoke reassured the lad, who had been somewhat alarmed at the harsh tone and menacing expressions of his younger companion; and he poured forth, in his patois, a flood of names, in which the German guttural sounds were strangely intermixed with the soft accents of the Italian, but which carried to the hearer no intelligible information concerning the object of his question; so that, at length, he was forced to conclude, "Even lead on, in Our Lady's name, or in St. Antonio's, if you like it better; we shall but lose time, I see, in trying to understand each other."

They moved on as before, with this difference, that the guide, leading the mule, now went first, and was followed by the other two, whose motions he had formerly directed by calling to them from behind. The clouds meantime became thicker and thicker, and the mist, which had at first been a thin vapor, began now to descend in the form of a small thick rain, which gathered like dew upon the capotes of the travelers. Distant rustling and groaning sounds were heard among the remote mountains, similar to those by which the Evil Spirit of Mount Pilatre had seemed to announce the storm. The boy again pressed his companions to advance, but at the same time threw impediments in the way of their doing so, by the slowness and indecision which he showed in leading them on.

Having proceeded in this manner for three or four miles, which uncertainty rendered doubly tedious, the travelers were at length engaged in a narrow path, running along the verge of a precipice. Beneath was water, but of what description they could not ascertain. The wind, indeed, which began to be felt in sudden gusts, sometimes swept aside the mist so completely as to show the waves glimmering below; but whether they were those of the same lake on which their morning journey had commenced, whether it was another and separate sheet of water of a similar character, or whether it was a river or large brook, the view afforded was too indistinct to determine. Thus far was certain, that they were not on the shores of the Lake of Lucerne, where it displays its usual expanse of waters; for the same hurricane gusts which showed them water in the bottom of the glen gave them a transient view of the opposite side, at what exact

distance they could not well discern, but near enough to show tall abrupt rocks and shaggy pine trees, here united in groups, and there singly anchored among the cliffs which overhung the water. This was a more distinct landscape than the farther side of the lake would have offered, had they been on the right road.

Hitherto the path, though steep and rugged, was plainly enough indicated, and showed traces of having been used both by riders and foot passengers. But suddenly, as Antonio with the loaded mule had reached a projecting eminence, around the peak of which the path made a sharp turn, he stopped short, with his usual exclamation, addressed to his patron saint. It appeared to Arthur that the mule shared the terrors of the guide : for it started back, put forwards its fore feet separate from each other, and seemed, by the attitude which it assumed, to intimate a determination to resist every proposal to advance, at the same time expressing horror and fear at the prospect which lay before it.

Arthur pressed forward, not only from curiosity, but that he might if possible bear the brunt of any danger before his father came up to share it. In less time than we have taken to tell the story, the young man stood beside Antonio and the mule, upon a platform of rock on which the road seemed absolutely to terminate, and from the farther side of which a precipice sunk sheer down, to what depth the mist did not permit him to discern, but certainly uninterrupted for more than three hundred feet.

The blank expression which overcast the visage of the younger traveler, and traces of which might be discerned in the physiognomy of the beast of burden, announced alarm and mortification at this unexpected, and, as it seemed, insurmountable, obstacle. Nor did the looks of the father, who presently after came up to the same spot, convey either hope or comfort. He stood with the others gazing on the misty gulf beneath them, and looking all around, but in vain, for some continuation of the path, which certainly had never been originally designed to terminate in this summary manner. As they stood uncertain what to do next, the son in vain attempting to discover some mode of passing onward, and the father about to propose that they should return by the road which had brought them hither, a loud howl of the wind, more wild than they had yet heard, swept down the valley. All being aware of the danger of being hurled from the precarious station which they occupied, snatched at bushes and rocks by which to secure themselves, and even

the poor mule seemed to steady itself in order to withstand the approaching hurricane. The gust came with such unexpected fury, that it appeared to the travelers to shake the very rock on which they stood, and would have swept them from its surface like so many dry leaves, had it not been for the momentary precautions which they had taken for their safety. But as the wind rushed down the glen, it completely removed for the space of three or four minutes the veil of mist which former gusts had only served to agitate or discompose, and showed them the nature and cause of the interruption which they had met with so unexpectedly.

The rapid but correct eye of Arthur was then able to ascertain that the path, after leaving the platform of rock on which they stood, had originally passed upwards in the same direction along the edge of a steep bank of earth, which had then formed the upper covering of a stratum of precipitous rocks. But it had chanced, in some of the convulsions of nature which take place in those wild regions, where she works upon a scale so formidable, that the earth had made a slip, or almost a precipitous descent, from the rock, and been hurled downwards with the path, which was traced along the top, and with bushes, trees, or whatever grew upon it, into the channel of the stream ; for such they could now discern the water beneath them to be, and not a lake, or an arm of a lake, as they had hitherto supposed.

The immediate cause of this phenomenon might probably have been an earthquake, not unfrequent in that country. The bank of earth, now a confused mass of ruins inverted in its fall, showed some trees growing in a horizontal position, and others which, having pitched on their heads in their descent, were at once inverted and shattered to pieces, and lay a sport to the streams of the river which they had heretofore covered with gloomy shadow. The gaunt precipice which remained behind, like the skeleton of some huge monster divested of its flesh, formed the wall of a fearful abyss, resembling the face of a newly-wrought quarry, more dismal of aspect from the rawness of its recent formation, and from its being as yet uncovered with any of the vegetation with which nature speedily mantles over the bare surface even of her sternest crags and precipices.

Besides remarking these appearances, which tended to show that this interruption of the road had been of recent occurrence, Arthur was able to observe, on the further side of the river, higher up the valley, and rising out of the pine forests, interspersed with rocks, a square building of con-

siderable height, like the ruins of a Gothic tower. He pointed out this remarkable object to Antonio, and demanded if he knew it, justly conjecturing that, from the peculiarity of the site, it was a landmark not easily to be forgotten by any who had seen it before. Accordingly, it was gladly and promptly recognized by the lad, who called cheerfully out that the place was Geierstein—that is, as he explained it, the Rock of the Vultures. He knew it, he said, by the old tower, as well as by a huge pinnacle of rock which arose near it, almost in the form of a steeple, to the top of which the lammergeier (one of the largest birds of prey known to exist) had in former days transported the child of an ancient lord of the castle. He proceeded to recount the vow which was made by the knight of Geierstein to Our Lady of Einsiedlen ; and, while he spoke, the castle, rocks, woods, and precipices again faded in mist. But as he concluded his wonderful narrative with the miracle which restored the infant again to its father's arms, he cried out suddenly, "Look to yourselves—the storm !—the storm !" It came accordingly, and, sweeping the mist before it, again bestowed on the travelers a view of the horrors around them.

"Ay !" quoth Antonio, triumphantly, as the gust abated, "old Pontius loves little to hear of Our Lady of Einsiedlen ; but she will keep her own with him. Ave Maria !"

"That tower," said the young traveler, "seems uninhabited. I can descry no smoke, and the battlement appears ruinous."

"It has not been inhabited for many a day," answered the guide. "But I would I were at it, for all that. Honest Arnold Biederman, the *landamman* (chief magistrate) of the canton of Unterwalden, dwells near, and I warrant you distressed strangers will not want the best that cupboard and cellar can find them wherever he holds rule."

"I have heard of him," said the elder traveler, whom Antonio had been taught to call Seignor Philipson—"a good and hospitable man, and one who enjoys deserved weight with his countrymen."

"You have spoken him right, seignor," answered the guide ; "and I would we could reach his house, where you should be sure of hospitable treatment, and a good direction for your next day's journey. But how we are to get to the Vulture's Castle, unless we had wings like the vulture, is a question hard to answer."

Arthur replied by a daring proposal, which the reader will find in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II

Away with me.
The clouds grow thicker—there—now lean on me.
Place your foot here—here, take this staff, and cling
A moment to that shrub—now, give me your hand.
. . . . . .
The chalet will be gained in half an hour.

Manfred.

After surveying the desolate scene as accurately as the stormy state of the atmosphere would permit, the younger of the travelers observed, "In any other country I should say the tempest begins to abate, but what to expect in this land of desolation it were rash to decide. If the apostate spirit of Pilate be actually on the blast, these lingering and more distant howls seem to intimate that he is returning to his place of punishment. The pathway has sunk with the ground on which it was traced: I can see part of it lying down in the abyss, marking, as with a streak of clay, yonder mass of earth and stone. But I think it possible, with your permission, my father, that I could still scramble forward along the edge of the precipice, till I come in sight of the habitation which the lad tells us of. If there be actually such a one, there must be an access to it somewhere; and if I cannot find the path out, I can at least make a signal to those who dwell near the Vulture's Nest yonder, and obtain some friendly guidance."

"I cannot consent to your incurring such a risk," said his father; "let the lad go forward, if he can and will. He is mountain-bred, and I will reward him richly."

But Antonio declined the proposal absolutely and decidedly. "I am mountain-bred," he said, "but I am no chamois-hunter; and I have no wings to transport me from cliff to cliff, like a raven—gold is not worth life."

"And God forbid," said Seignor Philipson, "that I should tempt thee to weigh them against each other! Go on, then, my son—I follow thee."

"Under your favor, dearest sir, no," replied the young man; "it is enough to endanger the life of one, and mine,

far the most worthless, should, by all the rules of wisdom as well as nature, be put first in hazard."

"No, Arthur," replied his father, in a determined voice —"no, my son: I have survived much, but I will not survive thee."

"I fear not for the issue, father, if you permit me to go alone; but I cannot—dare not—undertake a task so perilous, if you persist in attempting to share it, with no better aid than mine. While I endeavored to make a new advance, I should be ever looking back to see how you might attain the station which I was about to leave. And bethink you, dearest father, that, if I fall, I fall an unregarded thing, of as little moment as the stone or tree which has toppled headlong down before me. But you—should your foot slip or your hand fail, bethink you what and how much must needs fall with you!"

"Thou art right, my child," said the father. "I still have that which binds me to life, even though I were to lose in thee all that is dear to me. Our Lady and Our Lady's knight bless thee and prosper thee, my child! Thy foot is young, thy hand is strong; thou hast not climbed Plynlimmon in vain. Be bold, but be wary; remember there is a man who, failing thee, has but one act of duty to bind him to the earth, and, that discharged, who will soon follow thee."

The young man accordingly prepared for his journey, and, stripping himself of his cumbrous cloak, showed his well-proportioned limbs in a jerkin of gray cloth, which sat close to his person. The father's resolution gave way when his son turned round to bid him farewell. He recalled his permission, and in a peremptory tone forbade him to proceed. But without listening to the prohibition, Arthur had commenced his perilous adventure. Descending from the platform on which he stood, by the boughs of an old ash-tree which thrust itself out of the cleft of a rock, the youth was enabled to gain, though at great risk, a narrow ledge, the very brink of the precipice, by creeping along which he hoped to pass on till he made himself heard or seen from the habitation, of whose existence the guide had informed him. His situation, as he pursued this bold purpose, appeared so precarious, that even the hired attendant hardly dared to draw breath as he gazed on him. The ledge which supported him seemed to grow so narrow as he passed along it as to become altogether invisible, while sometimes with his face to the precipice, sometimes looking forward, sometimes glancing his eyes upward, but never venturing to cast a look

below, lest his brain should grow giddy at a sight so appalling, he wound his way onward. To his father and the attendant, who beheld his progress, it was less that of a man advancing in the ordinary manner, and resting by aught connected with the firm earth, than that of an insect crawling along the face of a perpendicular wall, of whose progressive movement we are indeed sensible, but cannot perceive the means of its support. And bitterly, most bitterly, did the miserable parent now lament that he had not persisted in his purpose to encounter the baffling, and even perilous, measure of retracing his steps to the habitation of the preceding night. He should then, at least, have partaken the fate of the son of his love.

Meanwhile, the young man's spirits were strongly braced for the performance of his perilous task. He laid a powerful restraint on his imagination, which in general was sufficiently active, and refused to listen, even for an instant, to any of the horrible insinuations by which fancy augments actual danger. He endeavored manfully to reduce all around him to the scale of right reason, as the best support of true courage. "This ledge of rock," he urged to himself, "is but narrow, yet it has breadth enough to support me; these cliffs and crevices in the surface are small and distant, but the one affords as secure a resting-place to my feet, the other as available a grasp to my hands, as if I stood on a platform of a cubit broad, and rested my arm on a balustrade of marble. My safety, therefore, depends on myself. If I move with decision, step firmly, and hold fast, what signifies how near I am to the mouth of an abyss?"

Thus estimating the extent of his danger by the measure of sound sense and reality, and supported by some degree of practise in such exercise, the brave youth went forward on his awful journey, step by step, winning his way with a caution, and fortitude, and presence of mind which alone could have saved him from instant destruction. At length he gained a point where a projecting rock formed the angle of the precipice, so far as it had been visible to him from the platform. This, therefore, was the critical point of his undertaking; but it was also the most perilous part of it. The rock projected more than six feet forward over the torrent, which he heard raging at the depth of a hundred yards beneath, with a noise like subterranean thunder. He examined the spot with the utmost care, and was led, by the existence of shrubs, grass, and even stunted trees, to believe that this rock marked the farthest extent of the slip or slide

of earth, and that, could he but turn round the angle of which it was the termination, he might hope to attain the continuation of the path which had been so strangely interrupted by this convulsion of nature. But the crag jutted out so much as to afford no possiblility of passing either under or around it; and as it rose several feet above the position which Arthur had attained, it was no easy matter to climb over it. This was, however, the course which he chose, as the only mode of surmounting what he hoped might prove the last obstacle to his voyage of discovery. A projecting tree afforded him the means of raising and swinging himself up to the top of the crag. But he had scarcely planted himself on it, had scarcely a moment to congratulate himself on seeing, amid a wild chaos of cliffs and wood, the gloomy ruins of Geierstein, with smoke arising, and indicating something like a human habitation beside them, when, to his extreme terror, he felt the huge cliff on which he stood tremble, stoop slowly forward, and gradually sink from its position. Projecting as it was, and shaken as its equilibrium had been by the recent earthquake, it lay now so insecurely poised, that its balance was entirely destroyed even by the addition of the young man's weight.

Aroused by the imminence of the danger, Arthur, by an instinctive attempt at self-preservation, drew cautiously back from the falling crag into the tree by which he had ascended, and turned his head back as if spellbound, to watch the descent of the fatal rock from which he had just retreated. It tottered for two or three seconds, as if uncertain which way to fall; and had it taken a sidelong direction, must have dashed the adventurer from his place of refuge, or borne both the tree and him headlong down into the river. After a moment of horrible uncertainty, the power of gravitation determined a direct and forward descent. Down went the huge fragment, which must have weighed at least twenty ton, rending and splintering in its precipitate course the trees and bushes which it encountered, and settling at length in the channel of the torrent, with a din equal to the discharge of a hundred pieces of artillery. The sound was re-echoed from bank to bank, from precipice to precipice, with emulative thunders; nor was the tumult silent till it rose into the region of eternal snows, which, equally insensible to terrestrial sounds and unfavorable to animal life, heard the roar in their majestic solitude, but suffered it to die away without a responsive voice.

What, in the meanwhile, were the thoughts of the dis-

tracted father, who saw the ponderous rock descend, but could not mark whether his only son had borne it company in its dreadful fall! His first impulse was to rush forward along the face of the precipice which he had seen Arthur so lately traverse; and when the lad Antonio withheld him, by throwing his arms around him, he turned on the guide with the fury of a bear which had been robbed of her cubs.

"Unhand me, base peasant," he exclaimed, "or thou diest on the spot!"

"Alas!" said the poor boy, dropping on his knees before him, "I too have a father!"

The appeal went to the heart of the traveler, who instantly let the lad go, and, holding up his hands and lifting his eyes towards heaven, said, in accents of the deepest agony, mingled with devout resignation, "*Fiat voluntas tua!* He was my last, and loveliest, and best beloved, and most worthy of my love; and yonder," he added—"yonder over the glen soar the birds of prey who are to feast on his young blood. But I will see him once more," exclaimed the miserable parent, as the huge carrion vulture floated past him on the thick air—"I will see my Arthur once more, ere the wolf and the eagle mangle him—I will see all of him that earth still holds. Detain me not; but abide here, and watch me as I advance. If I fall, as is most likely, I charge you to take the sealed papers which you will find in the valise, and carry them to the person to whom they are addressed, with the least possible delay. There is money enough in the purse to bury me with my poor boy, and to cause masses be said for our souls, and yet leave you a rich recompense for your journey."

The honest Swiss lad, obtuse in his understanding, but kind and faithful in his disposition, blubbered as his employer spoke, and, afraid to offer farther remonstrance or opposition, saw his temporary master prepare himself to traverse the same fatal precipice over the verge of which his ill-fated son had seemed to pass to the fate which, with all the wildness of a parent's anguish, his father was hastening to share.

Suddenly there was heard, from beyond the fatal angle from which the mass of stone had been displaced by Arthur's rash ascent, the loud hoarse sound of one of those huge horns made out of the spoils of the urus, or wild bull, of Switzerland, which in ancient times announced the terrors of the charge of these mountaineers, and, indeed, served them in war instead of all musical instruments.

"Hold, sir—hold!" exclaimed the Grison, "yonder is a signal from Geierstein. Some one will presently come to our assistance, and show us the safer way to seek for your son. And look you—at yon green bush that is glimmering through the mist, St. Antonio preserve me, as I see a white cloth displayed there! It is just beyond the point where the rock fell."

The father endeavored to fix his eyes on the spot, but they filled so fast with tears, that they could not discern the object which the guide pointed out. "It is all in vain," he said, dashing the tears from his eyes: "I shall never see more of him than his lifeless remains."

"You will—you will see him in life," said the Grison. "St. Antonio wills it so. See, the white cloth waves again."

"Some remnant of his garments," said the despairing father—"some wretched memorial of his fate. No, my eyes see it not. I have beheld the fall of my house; would that the vultures of these crags had rather torn them from their sockets!"

"Yet look again," said the Swiss; "the cloth hangs not loose upon a bough: I can see that it is raised on the end of a staff, and is distinctly waved to and fro. Your son makes a signal that he is safe."

"And if it be so," said the traveler, clasping his hands together, "blessed be the eyes that see it, and the tongue that tells it! If we find my son, and find him alive, this day shall be a lucky one for thee too."

"Nay," answered the lad, "I only ask that you will abide still, and act by counsel, and I will hold myself quit for my services. Only, it is not creditable to an honest lad to have people lose themselves by their own wilfulness; for the blame, after all, is sure to fall upon the guide, as if he could prevent old Pontius from shaking the mist from his brow, or banks of earth from slipping down into the valley at a time, or young hare-brained gallants from walking upon precipices as narrow as the edge of a knife, or madmen, whose gray hairs might make them wiser, from drawing daggers like bravos in Lombardy."

Thus the guide ran on, and in that vein he might have long continued, for Seignor Philipson heard him not. Each throb of his pulse, each thought of his heart, was directed towards the object which the lad referred to as a signal of his son's safety. He became at length satisfied that the signal was actually waved by a human hand; and, as eager in the glow of reviving hope as he had of late been under

the influence of desperate grief, he again prepared for the attempt of advancing towards his son, and assisting him, if possible, in regaining a place of safety. But the entreaties and reiterated assurances of his guide induced him to pause.

"Are you fit," he said, "to go on the crag? Can you repeat your credo and ave without missing or misplacing a word? for without that our old men say your neck, had you a score of them, would be in danger. Is your eye clear, and your feet firm? I trow the one streams like a fountain, and the other shakes like the aspen which overhangs it! Rest here till those arrive who are far more able to give your son help than either you or I are. I judge, by the fashion of his blowing, that yonder is the horn of the goodman of Geierstein, Arnold Biederman. He hath seen your son's danger, and is even now providing for his safety and ours. There are cases in which the aid of one stranger, well acquainted with the country, is worth that of three brothers who know not the crags."

"But if yonder horn really sounded a signal," said tne traveler, "how chanced it that my son replied not?"

"And if he did so, as is most likely he did," rejoined the Grison, "how should we have heard him? The bugle of Uri itself sounded amid these horrible dins of water and tempest like the reed of a shepherd boy; and how think you we should hear the halloo of a man?"

"Yet, methinks," said Seignor Philipson, "I do hear something amid this roar of elements which is like a human voice; but it is not Arthur's."

"I wot well, no," answered the Grison: "that is a woman's voice. The maidens will converse with each other in that manner from cliff to cliff, through storm and tempest, were there a mile between."

"Now, Heaven be praised for this providential relief!" said Seignor Philipson; "I trust we shall yet see this dreadful day safely ended. I will halloo in answer."

He attempted to do so, but, inexperienced in the art of making himself heard in such a country, he pitched his voice in the same key with that of the roar of wave and wind; so that, even at twenty yards from the place where he was speaking, it must have been totally indistinguishable from that of the elemental war around them. The lad smiled at his patron's ineffectual attempts, and then raised his voice himself in a high, wild, and prolonged scream, which, while produced with apparently much less effort than that of the Englishman, was, neverthless, a distinct sound, separated

from others by the key to which it was pitched, and was probably audible to a very considerable distance. It was presently answered by distant cries of the same nature, which gradually approached the platform, bringing renovated hope to the anxious traveler.

If the distress of the father rendered his condition an object of deep compassion, that of the son, at the same moment, was sufficiently perilous. We have already stated that Arthur Philipson had commenced his precarious journey along the precipice with all the coolness, resolution, and unshaken determination of mind which was most essential to a task where all must depend upon firmness of nerve. But the formidable accident which checked his onward progress was of a character so dreadful as made him feel all the bitterness of a death instant, horrible, and, as it seemed, inevitable. The solid rock had trembled and rent beneath his footsteps, and although, by an effort rather mechanical than voluntary, he had withdrawn himself from the instant ruin attending its descent, he felt as if the better part of him, his firmness of mind and strength of body, had been rent away with the descending rock, as it fell thundering, with clouds of dust and smoke, into the torrents and whirlpools of the vexed gulf beneath. In fact, the seaman swept from the deck of a wrecked vessel, drenched in the waves, and battered against the rocks on the shore, does not differ more from the same mariner when, at the commencement of the gale, he stood upon the deck of his favorite ship, proud of her strength and his own dexterity, than Arthur, when commencing his journey, from the same Arthur, while clinging to the decayed trunk of an old tree, from which, suspended between heaven and earth, he saw the fall of the crag which he had so nearly accompanied. The effects of his terror, indeed, were physical as well as moral, for a thousand colors played before his eyes; he was attacked by a sick dizziness, and deprived at once of the obedience of those limbs which had hitherto served him so admirably; his arms and hands, as if no longer at his own command clung to the branches of the tree, with a cramp-like tenacity over which he seemed to possess no power, and now trembled in a state of such complete nervous relaxation as led him to fear that they were becoming unable to support him longer in his position.

An incident, in itself trifling, added to the distress occasioned by this alienation of his powers. All living things in the neighborhood had, as might be supposed, been startled

by the tremendous fall to which his progress had given occasion. Flights of owls, bats, and other birds of darkness, compelled to betake themselves to the air, had lost no time in returning into their bowers of ivy, or the harbor afforded them by the rifts and holes of the neighboring rocks. One of this ill-omened flight chanced to be a lammergeier, or Alpine vulture, a bird larger and more voracious than the eagle himself, and which Arthur had not been accustomed to see, or at least to look upon closely. With the instinct of most birds of prey, it is the custom of this creature, when gorged with food, to assume some station of inaccessible security, and there remain stationary and motionless for days together, till the work of digestion has been accomplished, and activity returns with the pressure of appetite. Disturbed from such a state of repose, one of these terrific birds had risen from the ravine to which the species gives its name, and having circled unwillingly round, with a ghastly scream and a flagging wing, it had sunk down upon the pinnacle of a crag, not four yards from the tree in which Arthur held his precarious station. Although still in some degree stupified by torpor, it seemed encouraged by the motionless state of the young man to suppose him dead or dying, and sat there and gazed at him, without displaying any of that apprehension which the fiercest animals usually entertain from the vicinity of man.

As Arthur, endeavoring to shake off the incapacitating effects of his panic fear, raised his eyes to look gradually and cautiously around, he encountered those of the voracious and obscene bird, whose head and neck denuded of feathers, her eyes surrounded by an iris of an orange-tawny color, and a position more horizontal than erect, distinguished her as much from the noble carriage and graceful proportions of the eagle as those of the lion place him in the ranks of creation above the gaunt, ravenous, grisly, yet dastard wolf.

As if arrested by a charm, the eyes of young Philipson remained bent on this ill-omened and ill-favored bird, without his having the power to remove them. The apprehension of dangers, ideal as well as real, weighed upon his weakened mind, disabled as it was by the circumstances of his situation. The near approach of a creature not more loathsome to the human race than averse to come within their reach seemed as ominous as it was unusual. Why did it gaze on him with such glaring earnestness, projecting its disgusting form, as if presently to alight upon his person? The foul bird, was she the demon of the place to which her

name referred, and did she come to exult that an intruder on her haunts seemed involved amid their perils, with little hope or chance of deliverance? Or was it a native vulture of the rocks, whose sagacity foresaw that the rash traveler was soon destined to become its victim? Could the creature, whose senses are said to be so acute, argue from circumstances the stranger's approaching death, and wait, like a raven or hooded crow by a dying sheep, for the earliest opportunity to commence her ravenous banquet? Was he doomed to feel its beak and talons before his heart's blood should cease to beat? Had he already lost the dignity of humanity, the awe which the being formed in the image of his Maker inspires into all inferior creatures?

Apprehensions so painful served more than all that reason could suggest to renew in some degree the elasticity of the young man's mind. By waving his handkerchief, using, however, the greatest precaution in his movements, he succeeded in scaring the vulture from his vicinity. It rose from its resting-place, screaming harshly and dolefully, and sailed on its expanded pinions to seek a place of more undisturbed repose, while the adventurous traveler felt a sensible pleasure at being relieved of its disgusting presence.

With more collected ideas, the young man, who could obtain, from his position, a partial view of the platform he had left, endeavored to testify his safety to his father, by displaying, as high as he could, the banner by which he had chased off the vulture. Like them, too, he heard, but at a less distance, the burst of the great Swiss horn, which seemed to announce some near succor. He replied by shouting and waving his flag, to direct assistance to the spot where it was so much required; and, recalling his faculties, which had almost deserted him, he labored mentally to recover hope, and with hope the means and motive for exertion.

A faithful Catholic, he eagerly recommended himself in prayer to Our Lady of Einsiedlen, and making vows of propitation, besought her intercession that he might be delivered from his dreadful condition. "Or, gracious Lady," he concluded his orison, "if it is my doom to lose my life like a hunted fox amidst this savage wilderness of tottering crags, restore at least my natural sense of patience and courage, and let not one who has lived like a man, though a sinful one, meet death like a timid hare!"

Having devoutly recommended himself to that protectress, of whom the legends of the Catholic Church form a picture so amiable, Arthur, though every nerve still shook with his

late agitation, and his heart throbbed with a violence that threatened to suffocate him, turned his thoughts and observation to the means of effecting his escape. But, as he looked around him, he became more and more sensible how much he was enervated by the bodily injuries and the mental agony which he had sustained during his late peril. He could not, by any effort of which he was capable, fix his giddy and bewildered eyes on the scene around him: they seemed to reel till the landscape danced along with them, and a motley chaos of thickets and tall cliffs, which interposed between him and the ruinous Castle of Geierstein, mixed and whirled round in such confusion, that nothing save the consciousness that such an idea was the suggestion of partial insanity prevented him from throwing himself from the tree, as if to join the wild dance to which his disturbed brain had given motion.

"Heaven be my protection!" said the unfortunate young man, closing his eyes, in hopes, by abstracting himself from the terrors of his situation, to compose his too active imagination, "my senses are abandoning me!"

He became still more convinced that this was the case, when a female voice, in a high-pitched but eminently musical accent, was heard at no great distance, as if calling to him. He opened his eyes once more, raised his head, and looked towards the place from whence the sounds seemed to come, though far from being certain that they existed saving in his own disordered imagination. The vision which appeared had almost confirmed him in the opinion that his mind was unsettled, and his senses in no state to serve him accurately.

Upon the very summit of a pyramidical rock that rose out of the depth of the valley was seen a female figure, so obscured by mist that only the outline could be traced. The form, reflected against the sky, appeared rather the undefined lineaments of a spirit than of a mortal maiden; for her person seemed as light, and scarcely more opaque, than the thin cloud that surrounded her pedestal. Arthur's first belief was that the Virgin had heard his vows, and had descended in person to his rescue; and he was about to recite his Ave Maria, when the voice again called to him with the singular shrill modulation of the mountain halloo, by which the natives of the Alps can hold conference with each other from one mountain ridge to another, across ravines of great depth and width.

While he debated how to address this unexpected appa-

rition, it disappeared from the point which it at first occupied, and presently after became again visible, perched on the cliff out of which projected the tree in which Arthur had taken refuge. Her personal appearance, as well as her dress, made it then apparent that she was a maiden of these mountains, familiar with their dangerous paths. He saw that a beautiful young woman stood before him, who regarded him with a mixture of pity and wonder.

"Stranger," she at length said, "who are you, and whence come you?"

"I am a stranger, maiden, as you justly term me," answered the young man, raising himself as well as he could. "I left Lucerne this morning, with my father and a guide. I parted with them not three furlongs from hence. May it please you, gentle maiden, to warn them of my safety, for I know my father will be in despair upon my account?"

"Willingly," said the maiden; "but I think my uncle, or some one of my kinsmen, must have already found them, and will prove faithful guides. Can I not aid you? Are you wounded—are you hurt? We were alarmed by the fall of a rock—ay, and yonder it lies, a mass of no ordinary size."

As the Swiss maiden spoke thus, she approached so close to the verge of the precipice, and looked with such indifference into the gulf, that the sympathy which connects the actor and spectator upon such occasions brought back the sickness and vertigo from which Arthur had just recovered, and he sunk back into his former more recumbent posture with something like a faint groan.

"You are then ill?" said the maiden, who observed him turn pale. "Where and what is the harm you have received?"

"None, gentle maiden, saving some bruises of little import; but my head turns, and my heart grows sick, when I see you so near the verge of the cliff."

"Is that all?" replied the Swiss maiden. "Know, stranger, that I do not stand on my uncle's hearth with more security than I have stood upon precipices compared to which this is a child's leap. You too, stranger, if, as I judge from the traces, you have come along the edge of the precipice which the earth-slide hath laid bare, ought to be far beyond such weakness, since surely you must be well entitled to call yourself a cragsman."

"I might have called myself so half an hour since," answered Arthur; "but I think I shall hardly venture to assume the name in future."

"Be not downcast," said his kind adviser, "for a passing qualm, which will at times cloud the spirit and dazzle the eyesight of the bravest and most experienced. Raise yourself upon the trunk of the tree, and advance closer to the rock out of which it grows. Observe the place well. It is easy for you, when you have attained the lower part of the projecting stem, to gain by one bold step the solid rock upon which I stand, after which there is no danger or difficulty worthy of mention to a young man whose limbs are whole and whose courage is active."

"My limbs are indeed sound," replied the youth; "but I am ashamed to think how much my courage is broken. Yet I will not disgrace the interest you have taken in an unhappy wanderer by listening longer to the dastardly suggestions of a feeling which till to-day has been a stranger to my bosom."

The maiden looked on him anxiously, and with much interest, as, raising himself cautiously, and moving along the trunk of the tree, which lay nearly horizontal from the rock, and seemed to bend as he changed his posture, the youth at length stood upright within what, on level ground, had been but an extended stride to the cliff on which the Swiss maiden stood. But, instead of being a step to be taken on the level and firm earth, it was one which must cross a dark abyss, at the bottom of which a torrent surged and boiled with incredible fury. Arthur's knees knocked against each other, his feet became of lead, and seemed no longer at his command; and he experienced, in a stronger degree than ever, that unnerving influence which those who have been overwhelmed by it in a situation of like peril never can forget, and which others, happily strangers to its power, may have difficulty even in comprehending.

The young woman discerned his emotion, and foresaw its probable consequences. As the only mode in her power to restore his confidence, she sprung lightly from the rock to the stem of the tree, on which she alighted with the ease and security of a bird, and in the same instant back to the cliff; and extending her hand to the stranger, "My arm," she said, "is but a slight balustrade; yet do but step forward with resolution, and you will find it as secure as the battlement of Berne." But shame now overcame terror so much, that Arthur, declining assistance which he could not have accepted without feeling lowered in his own eyes, took heart of grace, and successfully achieved the formidable step which placed him upon the same cliff with his kind assistant.

To seize her hand and raise it to his lips, in affectionate token of gratitude and respect, was naturally the youth's first action; nor was it possible for the maiden to have prevented him from doing so without assuming a degree of prudery foreign to her character, and occasioning a ceremonious debate upon a matter of no great consequence, where the scene of action was a rock scarce five feet long by three in width, and which looked down upon a torrent roaring some hundred feet below.

CHAPTER III

Cursed be the gold and silver, which persuade
Weak man to follow far fatiguing trade,
The lily, peace, outshines the silver store;
And life is dearer than the golden ore,
Yet money tempts us o'er the desert brown,
To every distant mart and wealthy town.

Hassan, or the Camel-driver.

ARTHUR PHILIPSON and Anne of Geierstein, thus placed together in a situation which brought them into the closest possible contiguity, felt a slight degree of embarrassment; the young man, doubtless, from the fear of being judged a poltroon in the eyes of the maiden by whom he had been rescued, and the young woman, perhaps, in consequence of the exertion she had made, or a sense of being placed suddenly in a situation of such proximity to the youth whose life she had probably saved.

"And now, maiden," said Arthur, "I must repair to my father. The life which I owe to your assistance can scarce be called welcome to me unless I am permitted to hasten to his rescue."

He was here interrupted by another bugle-blast, which seemed to come from the quarter in which the elder Philipson and his guide had been left by their young and daring companion. Arthur looked in that direction; but the platform, which he had seen but imperfectly from the tree, when he was perched in that place of refuge, was invisible from the rock on which they now stood.

"It would cost me nothing to step back on yonder root," said the young woman, "to spy from thence whether I could see aught of your friends. But I am convinced they are under safer guidance than either yours or mine; for the horn announces that my uncle, or some of my young kinsmen, have reached them. They are by this time on their way to the Geierstein, to which, with your permission, I will become your guide; for you may be assured that my uncle Arnold will not allow you to pass farther to-day; and we shall but lose time by endeavoring to find your friends, who, situated where you say you left them, will reach the Geier-

stein sooner than we shall. Follow me, then, or I must suppose you weary of my guidance."

"Sooner suppose me weary of the life which your guidance has in all probability saved," replied Arthur, and prepared to attend her, at the same time taking a view of her dress and person which confirmed the satisfaction he had in following such a conductor, and which we shall take the liberty to detail somewhat more minutely than he could do at that time.

An upper vest, neither so close as to display the person, a habit forbidden by the sumptuary laws of the canton, nor so loose as to be an incumbrance in walking or climbing, covered a close tunic of a different color, and came down beneath the middle of the leg, but suffered the ankle, in all its fine proportions, to be completely visible. The foot was defended by a sandal, the point of which was turned upwards, and the crossings and knots of the strings which secured it on the front of the leg were garnished with silver rings. The upper vest was gathered round the middle by a sash of party-colored silk, ornamented with twisted threads of gold; while the tunic, open at the throat, permitted the shape and exquisite whiteness of a well-formed neck to be visible at the collar, and for an inch or two beneath. The small portion of the throat and bosom thus exposed was even more brilliantly fair than was promised by the countenance, which last bore some marks of having been freely exposed to the sun and air, by no means in a degree to diminish its beauty, but just so far as to show that the maiden possessed the health which is purchased by habits of rural exercise. Her long fair hair fell down in a profusion of curls on each side of a face whose blue eyes, lovely features, and dignified simplicity of expression implied at once a character of gentleness and of the self-relying resolution of a mind too virtuous to suspect evil and too noble to fear it. Above these locks, beauty's natural and most beseeming ornament—or rather, I should say, amongst them—was placed the small bonnet, which, from its size, little answered the purpose of protecting the head, but served to exercise the ingenuity of the fair wearer, who had not failed, according to the prevailing custom of the mountain maidens, to decorate the tiny cap with a heron's feather, and the then unusual luxury of a small and thin chain of gold, long enough to encircle the cap four or five times, and having the ends secured under a broad medal of the same costly metal.

I have only to add, that the stature of the young person

was something above the common size, and that the whole contour of her form, without being in the slightest degree masculine, resembled that of Minerva rather than the proud beauties of Juno or the yielding graces of Venus. The noble brow, the well-formed and active limbs, the firm and yet light step, above all, the total absence of anything resembling the consciousness of personal beauty, and the open and candid look, which seemed desirous of knowing nothing that was hidden, and conscious that she herself had nothing to hide, were traits not unworthy of the goddess of wisdom and of chastity.

The road which the young Englishman pursued, under the guidance of this beautiful young woman, was difficult and unequal, but could not be termed dangerous, at least in comparison to those precipices over which Arthur had recently passed. It was, in fact, a continuation of the path which the slip or slide of earth, so often mentioned, had interrupted; and although it had sustained damage in several places at the period of the same earthquake, yet there were marks of these having been already repaired in such a rude manner as made the way sufficient for the necessary intercourse of a people so indifferent as the Swiss to smooth or level paths. The maiden also gave Arthur to understand that the present road took a circuit for the purpose of gaining that on which he was lately traveling, and that, if he and his companions had turned off at the place where this new track united with the old pathway, they would have escaped the danger which had attended their keeping the road by the verge of the precipice.

The path which they now pursued was rather averted from the torrent, though still within hearing of its sullen thunders, which seemed to increase as they ascended parallel to its course, till suddenly the road, turning short, and directing itself straight upon the old castle, brought them within sight of one of the most splendid and awful scenes of that mountainous region.

The ancient tower of Geierstein, though neither extensive nor distinguished by architectural ornament, possessed an air of terrible dignity by its position on the very verge of the opposite bank of the torrent, which, just at the angle of the rock on which the ruins are situated, falls sheer over a cascade of nearly a hundred feet in height, and then rushes down the defile, through a trough of living rock, which perhaps its waves had been deepening since time itself had a commencement. Facing, and at the same time looking down

upon, this eternal roar of waters, stood the old tower, built so close to the verge of the precipice, that the buttresses with which the architect had strengthened the foundation seemed a part of the solid rock itself, and a continuation of its perpendicular ascent. As usual throughout Europe in the feudal times, the principal part of the building was a massive square pile, the decayed summit of which was rendered picturesque by flanking turrets of different sizes and heights, some round, some angular, some ruinous, some tolerably entire, varying the outline of the building as seen against the stormy sky.

A projecting sallyport, descending by a flight of steps from the tower, had in former times given access to a bridge connecting the castle with that side of the stream on which Arthur Philipson and his fair guide now stood. A single arch, or rather one rib of an arch, consisting of single stones, still remained, and spanned the river immediately in front of the waterfall. In former times this arch had served for the support of a wooden drawbridge, of more convenient breadth, and of such length and weight as must have been rather unmanageable, had it not been lowered on some solid resting-place. It is true, the device was attended with this inconvenience, that, even when the drawbridge was up, there remained a possibility of approaching the castle gate by means of this narrow rib of stone. But, as it was not above eighteen inches broad, and could only admit the daring foe who should traverse it to a doorway regularly defended by gate and portcullis, and having flanking turrets and projections, from which stones, darts, melted lead, and scalding water might be poured down on the soldiery who should venture to approach Geierstein by this precarious access, the possibility of such an attempt was not considered as diminishing the security of the garrison.

In the time we treat of, the castle being entirely ruined and dismantled, and the door, drawbridge, and portcullis gone, the dilapidated gateway, and the slender arch which connected the two sides of the stream were used as means of communication between the banks of the river by the inhabitants of the neighborhood, whom habit had familiarized with the dangerous nature of the passage.

Arthur Philipson had, in the mean time, like a good bow when new strung, regained the elasticity of feeling and character which was natural to him. It was not, indeed, with perfect composure that he followed his guide, as she tripped lightly over the narrow arch, composed of rugged stones,

and rendered wet and slippery with the perpetual drizzle of the mist issuing from the neighboring cascade. Nor was it without apprehension that he found himself performing this perilous feat in the neighborhood of the waterfall itself, whose deafening roar he could not exclude from his ears, though he took care not to turn his head towards its terrors, lest his brain should again be dizzied by the tumult of the waters as they shot forward from the precipice above, and plunged themselves into what seemed the fathomless gulf below. But, notwithstanding these feelings of agitation, the natural shame to show cowardice where a beautiful young female exhibited so much indifference, and the desire to regain his character in the eyes of his guide, prevented Arthur from again giving way to the appalling feelings by which he had been overwhelmed a short time before. Stepping firmly on, yet cautiously supporting himself with his piked staff, he traced the light footsteps of his guide along the bridge of dread, and followed her through the ruined sallyport, to which they ascended by stairs which were equally dilapidated.

The gateway admitted them into a mass of ruins, formerly a sort of courtyard to the donjon, which rose in gloomy dignity above the wreck of what had been works destined for external defense, or buildings for internal accommodation. They quickly passed through these ruins, over which vegetation had thrown a wild mantle of ivy and other creeping shrubs, and issued from them through the main gate of the castle into one of those spots in which nature often embosoms her sweetest charms, in the midst of districts chiefly characterized by waste and desolation.

The castle in this aspect also rose considerably above the neighboring ground, but the elevation of the site, which towards the torrent was an abrupt rock, was on this side a steep eminence, which had been scarped like a modern glacis, to render the building more secure. It was now covered with young trees and bushes, out of which the tower itself seemed to rise in ruined dignity. Beyond this hanging thicket the view was of a very different character. A piece of ground, amounting to more than a hundred acres, seemed scooped out of the rocks and mountains, which, retaining the same savage character with the tract in which the travelers had been that morning bewildered, inclosed, and as in were defended, a limited space of a mild and fertile character. The surface of this little domain was considerably varied, but its general aspect was a gentle slope to the southwest.

The principal object which it presented was a large house composed of huge logs, without any pretense to form or symmetry, but indicating, by the smoke which arose from it, as well as the extent of the neighboring offices, and the improved and cultivated character of the fields around, that it was the abode, not of splendor certainly, but of ease and competence. An orchard of thriving fruit-trees extended to the southward of the dwelling. Groves of walnut and chestnut grew in stately array, and even a vineyard, of three or four acres, showed that the cultivation of the grape was understood and practised. It is now universal in Switzerland, but was, in those early days, almost exclusively confined to a few more fortunate proprietors, who had the rare advantage of uniting intelligence with opulent, or at least easy circumstances.

There were fair ranges of pasture-fields, into which the fine race of cattle which constitute the pride and wealth of the Swiss mountaineers had been brought down from the more Alpine grazings where they had fed during the summer, to be near shelter and protection when the autumnal storms might be expected. On some selected spots, the lambs of the last season fed in plenty and security, and in others huge trees, the natural growth of the soil, were suffered to remain, from motives of convenience probably, that they might be at hand when timber was required for domestic use, but giving, at the same time, a woodland character to a scene otherwise agricultural. Through this mountain paradise the course of a small brook might be traced, now showing itself to the sun, which had by this time dispelled the fogs, now intimating its course by its gently sloping banks, clothed in some places with lofty trees, or concealing itself under thickets of hawthorn and nut bushes. This stream, by a devious and gentle course, which seemed to indicate a reluctance to leave this quiet region, found its way at length out of the sequestered domain, and, like a youth hurrying from the gay and tranquil sports of boyhood into the wild career of active life, finally united itself with the boisterous torrent, which, breaking down tumultuously from the mountains, shook the ancient tower of Geierstein as it rolled down the adjacent rock, and then rushed howling through the defile in which our youthful traveler had well-nigh lost his life.

Eager as the younger Philipson was to rejoin his father, he could not help pausing for a moment to wonder how so much beauty should be found amid such scenes of horror,

and a look back on the tower of Geierstein, and on the huge cliff from which it derived its name, as if to ascertain, by the sight of these distinguished landmarks, that he was actually in the neighborhood of the savage wild where he had encountered so much danger and terror. Yet so narrow were the limits of this cultivated farm, that it hardly required such a retrospect to satisfy the spectator that the spot susceptible of human industry, and on which it seemed that a considerable degree of labor had been bestowed, bore a very small proportion to the wilderness in which it was situated. It was on all sides surrounded by lofty hills, in some places rising into walls of rock, in others clothed with dark and savage forests of the pine and the larch, of primeval antiquity. Above these, from the eminence on which the tower was situated, could be seen the almost rosy hue in which an immense glacier threw back the sun; and, still higher over the frozen surface of that icy sea, arose, in silent dignity, the pale peaks of those countless mountains on which the snow eternally rests.

What we have taken some time to describe, occupied young Philipson only for one or two hurried minutes; for on a sloping lawn, which was in front of the farmhouse, as the mansion might be properly styled, he saw five or six persons, the foremost of whom, from his gait, his dress, and the form of his cap, he could easily distinguish as the parent whom he hardly expected at one time to have again beheld.

He followed, therefore, his conductress with a glad step, as she led the way down the steep ascent on which the ruined tower was situated. They approached the group whom Arthur had noticed, the foremost of which was his father, who hastily came forward to meet him, in company with another person, of advanced age, and stature wellnigh gigantic, and who, from his simple yet majestic bearing, seemed the worthy countryman of William Tell, Stauffacher, Winkelried, and other Swiss worthies, whose stout hearts and hardy arms had, in the preceding age, vindicated against countless hosts their personal liberty and the independence of their country.

With a natural courtesy, as if to spare the father and son many witnesses to a meeting which must be attended with emotion, the Landamman himself, in walking forward with the elder Philipson, signed to those by whom he was attended, all of whom seemed young men, to remain behind. They remained accordingly, examining, as it seemed, the guide Antonio, upon the adventures of the strangers. Anne, the

conductress of Arthur Philipson, had but time to say to him, "Yonder old man is my uncle, Arnold Biederman, and these young men are my kinsmen," when the former, with the elder traveler, was close before them. The Landamman, with the tame propriety of feeling which he had before displayed, signed to his niece to move a little aside; yet, while requiring from her an account of her morning's expedition, he watched the interview of the father and son with as much curiosity as his natural sense of complaisance permitted him to testify. It was of a character different from what he had expected.

We have already described the elder Philipson as a father devotedly attached to his son, ready to rush on death when he had expected to lose him, and equally overjoyed at heart, doubtless, to see him again restored to his affections. It might have been therefore expected that the father and son would rush into each other's arms, and such probably was the scene which Arnold Biederman expected to have witnessed.

But the English traveler, in common with many of his countrymen, covered keen and quick feelings with much appearance of coldness and reserve, and thought it a weakness to give unlimited sway even to the influence of the most amiable and most natural emotions. Eminently handsome in youth, his countenance, still fine in his more advanced years, had an expression which intimated an unwillingness either to yield to passion or encourage confidence. His pace, when he first beheld his son, had been quickened by the natural wish to meet him; but he slackened it as they drew near to each other, and when they met, said in a tone rather of censure and admonition than affection—"Arthur, may the saints forgive the pain thou hast this day given me."

"Amen," said the youth. "I must need pardon since I have given you pain. Believe, however, that I acted for the best."

"It is well, Arthur, that in acting for the best, according to your forward will, you have not encountered the worst."

"That I have not," answered the son, with the same devoted and patient submission, "is owing to this maiden," pointing to Anne, who stood at a few paces' distance, desirous, perhaps, of avoiding to witness the reproof of the father, which might seem to her rather ill-timed and unreasonable.

"To the maiden my thanks shall be rendered," said his father, "when I can study how to pay them in an adequate manner; but is it well or comely, think you, that you should

receive from a maiden the succor which it is your duty as a man to extend to the weaker sex?"

Arthur held down his head and blushed deeply, while Arnold Biederman, sympathizing with his feelings, stepped forward and mingled in the conversation.

"Never be abashed, my young guest, that you have been indebted for aught of counsel or assistance to a maiden of Unterwalden. Know that the freedom of their country owes no less to the firmness and wisdom of her daughters than to that of her sons. And you, my elder guest, who have, I judge, seen many years, and various lands, must have often known examples how the strong are saved by the help of the weak, the proud by the aid of the humble."

"I have at least learned," said the Englishman, "to debate no point unnecessarily with the host who has kindly harbored me;" and after one glance at his son, which seemed to kindle with the fondest affection, he resumed, as the party turned back towards the house, a conversation which he had been maintaining with his new acquaintance before Arthur and the maiden had joined them.

Arthur had in the mean time an opportunity of observing the figure and features of their Swiss landlord, which, I have already hinted, exhibited a primeval simplicity mixed with a certain rude dignity, arising out of its masculine and unaffected character. The dress did not greatly differ in form from the habit of the female which we have described. It consisted of an upper frock, shaped like the modern shirt, and only open at the bosom, worn above a tunic or under doublet. But the man's vest was considerably shorter in the skirts, which did not come lower down than the kilt of the Scottish Highlander; a species of boots or buskins rose above the knee, and the person was thus entirely clothed. A bonnet made of the fur of the marten, and garnished with a silver medal, was the only part of the dress which displayed anything like ornament; the broad belt which gathered the garment together was of buff leather, secured by a large brass buckle.

But the figure of him who wore this homely attire, which seemed almost wholly composed of the fleeces of the mountain sheep and the spoils of animals of the chase, would have commanded respect wherever the wearer had presented himself, especially in those warlike days, when men were judged of according to the promising or unpromising qualities of their thewes and sinews. To those who looked at Arnold Biederman in this point of view, he displayed the size and

form, the broad shoulders and prominent muscles, of a Hercules. But to such as looked rather at his countenance, the steady, sagacious features, open front, large blue eyes, and deliberate resolution which it expressed more resembled the character of the fabled Kings of God and Men. He was attended by several sons and relatives, young men, among whom he walked, receiving, as his undeniable due, respect and obedience, similar to that which a herd of deer are observed to render to the monarch stag.

While Arnold Biederman walked and spoke with the elder stranger, the young men seemed closely to scrutinize Arthur, and occasionally interrogated in whispers their relation Anne, receiving from her brief and impatient answers, which rather excited than appeased the vein of merriment in which the mountaineers indulged, very much, as it seemed to the young Englishman, at the expense of their guest. To feel himself exposed to derision was not softened by the reflection, that in such a society it would probably be attached to all who could not tread on the edge of a precipice with a step as firm and undismayed as if they walked the street of a city. However unreasonable ridicule may be, it is always unpleasing to be subjected to it, but more particularly is it distressing to a young man, where beauty is a listener. It was some consolation to Arthur that he thought the maiden certainly did not enjoy the jest, and seemed by word and look to reprove the rudeness of her companions; but this he feared was only from a sense of humanity.

"She, too, must despise me," he thought, "though civility, unknown to these ill-taught boors, has enabled her to conceal contempt under the guise of pity. She can but judge of me from that which she has seen; if she could know me better (such was his proud thought), she might perhaps rank me more highly."

As the travelers entered the habitation of Arnold Biederman, they found preparations made in a large apartment, which served the purpose of general accommodation, for a homely but plentiful meal. A glance round the walls showed the implements of agriculture and the chase; but the eyes of the elder Philipson rested upon a leathern corslet, a long heavy halberd, and a two-handed sword, which were displayed as a sort of trophy. Near these, but covered with dust, unfurbished and neglected, hung a helmet, with a visor, such as was used by knights and men-at-arms. The golden garland, or coronal, twisted around it, though sorely tarnished, indicated noble birth and rank; and the crest, which

was a vulture of the species which gave name to the old castle and its adjacent cliff, suggested various conjectures to the English guest, who, acquainted in a great measure with the history of the Swiss revolution, made little doubt that in this relic he saw some trophy of the ancient warfare between the inhabitants of these mountains and the feudal lord to whom they had of yore appertained.

A summons to the hospitable board disturbed the train of the English merchant's reflections; and a large company, comprising the whole inhabitants of every description that lived under Biederman's roof, sat down to a plentiful repast of goat's flesh, fish, preparations of milk of various kinds, cheese, and, for the upper mess, the venison of a young chamois. The Landamman himself did the honors of the table with great kindness and simplicity, and urged the strangers to show, by their appetite, that they thought themselves as welcome as he desired to make them. During the repast he carried on a conversation with his elder guest, while the younger people at table, as well as the menials, ate in modesty and silence. Ere the dinner was finished, a figure crossed on the outside of the large window which lighted the eating-hall, the sight of which seemed to occasion a lively sensation amongst such as observed it.

"Who passed?" said old Biederman to those seated opposite to the window.

"It is our cousin, Rudolph of Donnerhugel," answered one of Arnold's sons eagerly.

The annunciation seemed to give great pleasure to the younger part of the company, especially the sons of the Landamman; while the head of the family only said with a grave, calm voice—"Your kinsman is welcome; tell him so, and let him come hither."

Two or three arose for this purpose, as if there had been a contention among them who should do the honors of the house to the new guest. He entered presently—a young man, unusually tall, well-proportioned, and active, with a quantity of dark-brown locks curling around his face, together with mustachios of the same, or rather a still darker, hue. His cap was small considering the quantity of his thickly clustering hair, and rather might be said to hang upon one side of his head than to cover it. His clothes were of the same form and general fashion as those of Arnold, but made of much finer cloth, the manufacture of the German loom, and ornamented in a rich and fanciful manner. One sleeve of his vest was dark green, curiously laced and embroidered

with devices in silver, while the rest of the garment was scarlet. His sash was twisted and netted with gold, and besides answering the purpose of a belt, by securing the upper garment round his waist, sustained a silver-hilted poniard. His finery was completed by boots, the tips of which were so long as to turn upwards with a peak, after a prevailing fashion in the Middle Ages. A golden chain hung round his neck, and sustained a large medallion of the same metal.

This young gallant was instantly surrounded by the race of Biederman, among whom he appeared to be considered as the model upon which the Swiss youth ought to build themselves, and whose gait, opinions, dress, and manners all ought to follow who would keep pace with the fashion of the day, in which he reigned an acknowledged and unrivaled example.

By two persons in the company, however, it seemed to Arthur Philipson that this young man was received with less distinguished marks of regard than those with which he was hailed by the general voice of the youths present. Arnold Biederman himself was at least no way warm in welcoming the young Bernese, for such was Rudolph's country. The young man drew from his bosom a sealed packet, which he delivered to the Landamman with demonstrations of great respect, and seemed to expect that Arnold, when he had broken the seal and perused the contents, would say something to him on the subject. But the patriarch only bade him be seated and partake of their meal, and Rudolph found a place accordingly next to Anne of Geierstein, which was yielded to him by one of the sons of Arnold with ready courtesy.

It seemed also to the observant young Englishman that the newcomer was received with marked coldness by the maiden, to whom he appeared eager and solicitous to pay his compliments, by whose side he had contrived to seat himself at the well-furnished board, and to whom he seemed more anxious to recommend himself than to partake of the food which it offered. He observed the gallant whisper her and look towards him. Anne gave a very brief reply; but one of the young Biedermans, who sat on his other hand, was probably more communicative, as the youths both laughed, and the maiden again seemed disconcerted, and blushed with displeasure.

"Had I either of these sons of the mountain," thought young Philipson, "upon six yards of level greensward, if there be so much flat ground in this country, methinks I were more likely to spoil their mirth than to furnish food

for it. It is as marvelous to see such conceited boors under the same roof with so courteous and amiable a damsel as it would be to see one of their shaggy bears dance a rigadoon with a maiden like the daughter [niece] of our host. Well, I need not concern myself more than I can help about her beauty or their breeding, since morning will separate me from them forever."

As these reflections passed through the young guest's mind, the father of the family called for a cup of wine, and having required the two strangers to pledge him in a maple cup of considerable size, he sent a similar goblet to Rudolph Donnerhugel. "Yet you," he said, "kinsman, are used to more highly flavored wine than the half-ripened grapes of Geierstein can supply. Would you think it, sir merchant," he continued, addressing Philipson, "there are burghers of Berne who send for wine for their own drinking both to France and Germany?"

"My kinsman disapproves of that," replied Rudolph; "yet every place is not blessed with vineyards like Geierstein, which produces all that heart and eye can desire." This was said with a glance at his fair companion, who did not appear to take the compliment, while the envoy of Berne proceeded—"But our wealthier burghers, having some superfluous crowns, think it no extravagance to barter them for a goblet of better wine than our own mountains can produce. But we will be more frugal when we have at our disposal tuns of the wine of Burgundy, for the mere trouble of transporting them."

"How mean you by that, cousin Rudolph?" said Arnold Biederman.

"Methinks, respected kinsman," answered the Bernese, "your letters must have told you that our Diet is likely to declare war against Burgundy?"

"Ah! and you know, then, the contents of my letters?" said Arnold—"another mark how times are changed at Berne and with the Diet of Switzerland. When did all her grayhaired statesmen die, that our allies should have brought beardless boys into their councils?"

"The Senate of Berne and the Diet of the Confederacy," said the young man, partly abashed, partly in vindication of what he had before spoken, "allow the young men to know their purposes, since it is they by whom they must be executed. The head which thinks may well confide in the hand that strikes."

"Not till the moment of dealing the blow, young man,"

said Arnold Biederman, sternly. "What kind of counselor is he who talks loosely the secrets of state affairs before women and strangers? Go, Rudolph, and all of ye, and try by manly exercises which is best fitted to serve your country, rather than give your judgment upon her measures. Hold, young man," he continued, addressing Arthur, who had arisen, "this does not apply to you, who are unused to mountain travel, and require rest after it."

"Under your favor, sir, not so," said the elder stranger; "we hold in England that the best refreshment after we have been exhausted by one species of exercise is to betake ourselves to another; as riding, for example, affords more relief to one fatigued by walking than a bed of down would. So, if your young men will permit, my son will join their exercises."

"He will find them rough playmates," answered the Switzer; "but be it at your pleasure."

The young men went out accordingly to the open lawn in front of the house. Anne of Geierstein, and some females of the household, sat down on a bank to judge which performed best, and shouts, loud laughing, and all that announces the riot of juvenile spirits occupied by manly sports, was soon after heard by the two seniors, as they sat together in the hall. The master of the house resumed the wine-flask, and, having filled the cup of his guest, poured the remainder into his own.

"At an age, worthy stranger," he said, "when the blood grows colder and the feelings heavier, a moderate cup of wine brings back light thoughts and makes the limbs supple. Yet I almost wish that Noah had never planted the grape, when of late years I have seen with my own eyes my countrymen swill wine like very Germans, till they were like gorged swine, incapable of sense, thought, or motion."

"It is a vice," said the Englishman, "which I have observed gains ground in your country, where within a century I have heard it was totally unknown."

"It was so," said the Swiss, "for wine was seldom made at home, and never imported from abroad; for, indeed, none possessed the means of purchasing that, or aught else, which our valleys produce not. But our wars and our victories have gained us wealth as well as fame; and in the poor thoughts of one Switzer at least, we had been better without both, had we not also gained liberty by the same exertion. It is something, however, that commerce may occasionally send into our remote mountains a sensible visitor like your-

self, worthy guest, whose discourse shows him to be a man of sagacity and discernment; for though I love not the increasing taste for trinkets and gewgaws which you merchants introduce, yet I acknowledge that we simple mountaineers learn from men like you more of the world around us than we could acquire by our own exertions. You are bound, you say, to Bâle, and thence to the Duke of Burgundy's leaguer?"

"I am so, my worthy host," said the merchant; "that is providing I can perform my journey with safety."

"Your safety, good friend, may be assured, if you list to tarry for two or three days; for in that space I shall myself take the journey, and with such an escort as will prevent any risk of danger. You will find in me a sure and faithful guide, and I shall learn from you much of other countries, which it concerns me to know better than I do. Is it a bargain?"

"The proposal is too much to my advantage to be refused," said the Englishman; "but may I ask the purpose of your journey?"

"I chid yonder boy but now," answered Biederman, "for speaking on public affairs without reflection, and before the whole family; but our tidings and my errand need not be concealed from a considerate person like you, who must indeed soon learn it from public rumor. You know doubtless the mutual hatred which subsists between Louis XI. of France and Charles of Burgundy, whom men call the Bold; and having seen these countries, as I understand from your former discourse, you are probably well aware of the various contending interests which, besides the personal hatred of the sovereigns, make them irreconcilable enemies. Now Louis, whom the world cannot match for craft and subtlety, is using all his influence, by distributions of large sums amongst some of the counselors of our neighbors of Berne, by pouring treasures into the exchequer of that state itself, by holding out the bait of emolument to the old men, and encouraging the violence of the young, to urge the Bernese into a war with the Duke. Charles, on the other hand, is acting, as he frequently does, exactly as Louis could have wished. Our neighbors and allies of Berne do not, like us of the Forest Cantons, confine themselves to pasture or agriculture, but carry on considerable commerce, which the Duke of Burgundy has in various instances interrupted, by the exactions and violence of his officers in the frontier towns, as is doubtless well known to you."

"Unquestionably," answered the merchant; "they are universally regarded as vexatious."

"You will not then be surprised that, solicited by the one sovereign and aggrieved by the other, proud of past victories and ambitious of additional power, Berne and the City Cantons of our confederacy, whose representatives, from their superior wealth and better education, have more to say in our Diet than we of the Forests, should be bent upon war, from which it has hitherto happened that the republic has always derived victory, wealth, and increase of territory."

"Ay, worthy host, and of glory," said Philipson, interrupting him with some enthusiasm; "I wonder not that the brave youths of your states are willing to thrust themselves upon new wars, since their past victories have been so brilliant and so far-famed."

"You are no wise merchant, kind guest," answered the host, "if you regard success in former desperate undertakings as an encouragement to future rashness. Let us make a better use of past victories. When we fought for our liberties God blessed our arms; but will He do so if we fight either for aggrandizement or for the gold of France."

"Your doubt is just," said the merchant, more sedately; "but suppose you draw the sword to put an end to the vexatious exactions of Burgundy?"

"Hear me, good friend," answered the Switzer; "it may be that we of the Forest Cantons think too little of those matters of trade which so much engross the attention of the burghers of Berne. Yet we will not desert our neighbors and allies in a just quarrel; and it is well-nigh settled that a deputation shall be sent to the Duke of Burgundy to request redress. In this embassy the General Diet now assembled at Berne have requested that I should take some share; and hence the journey in which I propose that you should accompany me."

"It will be much to my satisfaction to travel in your company, worthy host," said the Englishman. "But, as I am a true man, methinks your port and figure resemble an envoy of defiance rather than a messenger of peace."

"And I too might say," replied the Switzer, "that your language and sentiments, my honored guest, rather belong to the sword than the measuring wand."

"I was bred to the sword, worthy sir, before I took the cloth-yard in my hand," replied Philipson, smiling, "and it may be I am still more partial to my old trade than wisdom would altogether recommend."

"I thought so," said Arnold; "but then you fought most likely under your country's banners against a foreign and national enemy; and in that case I will admit that war has something in it which elevates the heart above the due sense it should entertain of the calamity inflicted and endured by God's creatures on each side. But the warfare in which I was engaged had no such gilding. It was the miserable war of Zurich, where Switzers leveled their pikes against the bosoms of their own countrymen; and quarter was asked and refused in the same kindly mountain language. From such remembrances your warlike recollections are probably free."

The merchant hung down his head and pressed his forehead with his hand, as one to whom the most painful thoughts were suddenly recalled.

"Alas!" he said, "I deserve to feel the pain which your words inflict. What nation can know the woes of England that has not felt them—what eye can estimate them which has not seen a land torn and bleeding with the strife of two desperate factions, battles fought in every province, plains heaped with slain, and scaffolds drenched in blood? Even in your quiet valleys, methinks, you may have heard of the Civil Wars of England?"

"I do indeed bethink me," said the Switzer, "that England had lost her possessions in France during many years of bloody internal wars concerning the color of a rose—was it not? But these are ended."

"For the present," answered Philipson, "it would seem so."

As he spoke there was a knock at the door. The master of the house said, "Come in"; the door opened, and, with the reverence which was expected from young persons towards their elders in those pastoral regions, the fine form of Anne of Geierstein presented itself.

CHAPTER IV

And now the well-known bow the master bore,
Turn'd on all sides, and view'd it o'er and o'er;
Whilst some deriding, "How he turns the bow!
Some other like it sure the man must know,
Or else would copy, or in bows he deals;
Perhaps he makes them, or perhaps he steals."

POPE'S *Homer's Odyssey.*

THE fair maiden approached with the half-bashful, half-important look which sits so well on a young housekeeper, when she is at once proud and ashamed of the matronly duties she is called upon to discharge, and whispered something in her uncle's ear.

"And could not the idle-pated boys have brought their own errand? What is it they want that they cannot ask themselves, but must send thee to beg it for them? Had it been anything reasonable, I should have heard it dinned into my ears by forty voices, so modest are our Swiss youths become nowadays." She stooped forward, and again whispered in his ear, as he fondly stroked her curling tresses with his ample hand, and replied, "The bow of Buttisholz, my dear? Why, the youths surely are not grown stronger since last year, when none of them could bend it? But yonder it hangs with its three arrows. Who is the wise champion that is challenger at a game where he is sure to be foiled?"

"It is this gentleman's son, sir," said the maiden, "who, not being able to contend with my cousins in running, leaping, hurling the bar, or pitching the stone, has challenged them to ride, or to shoot with the English long-bow."

"To ride," said the venerable Swiss, "were difficult, where there are no horses, and no level ground to career upon if there were. But an English bow he shall have, since we happen to possess one. Take it to the young men, my niece, with the three arrows, and say to them from me, that he who bends it will do more than William Tell or the renowned Stauffacher could have done."

As the maiden went to take the weapon from the place where it hung amid the group of arms which Philipson had formerly remarked, the English merchant observed, "that,

were the minstrels of his land to assign her occupation, so fair a maiden should be bow-bearer to none but the little blind god Cupid."

"I will have nothing of the blind god Cupid," said Arnold, hastily, yet half laughing at the same time; "we have been deafened with the foolery of minstrels and strolling minnesingers, ever since the wandering knaves have found there were pence to be gathered among us. A Swiss maiden should only sing Albert Tschudi's ballads, or the merry lay of the going out and return of the cows to and from the mountain pastures."

While he spoke, the damsel had selected from the arms a bow of extraordinary strength, considerably above six feet in length, with three shafts of a cloth-yard long. Philipson asked to look at the weapons, and examined them closely. "It is a tough piece of yew," he said. "I should know it, since I have dealt in such commodities in my time; but when I was of Arthur's age, I could have bent it as easily as a boy bends a willow."

"We are too old to boast like boys," said Arnold Biederman, with something of a reproving glance at his companion. "Carry the bow to thy kinsmen, Anne, and let him who can bend it say he beat Arnold Biederman." As he spoke, he turned his eyes on the spare yet muscular figure of the Englishman, then again glanced down on his own stately person.

"You must remember, my good host," said Philipson, "that weapons are wielded not by strength, but by art and sleight of hand. What most I wonder at is to see in this place a bow made by Matthew of Doncaster, a bowyer who lived at least a hundred years ago, remarkable for the great toughness and strength of the weapons which he made, and which are now become somewhat unmanageable, even by an English yeoman."

"How are you assured of the maker's name, worthy guest?" replied the Swiss.

"By old Matthew's mark," answered the Englishman, "and his initials cut upon the bow. I wonder not a little to find such a weapon here, and in such good preservation."

"It has been regularly waxed, oiled, and kept in good order," said the Landamman, "being preserved as a trophy of a memorable day. It would but grieve you to recount its early history, since it was taken in a day fatal to your country."

"My country," said the Englishman, composedly, "has

gained so many victories, that her children may well afford to hear of a single defeat. But I knew not that the English ever warred in Switzerland."

"Not precisely as a nation," answered Biederman; "but it was in my grandsire's days that a large body of roving soldiers, composed of men from almost all countries, but especially Englishmen, Normans, and Gascons, poured down on the Aargau and the districts adjacent. They were headed by a great warrior called Ingelram de Couci, who pretended some claims upon the Duke of Austria, to satisfy which he ravaged indifferently the Austrian territory and that of our Confederacy. His soldiers were hired warriors—Free Companions they called themselves—that seemed to belong to no country, and were as brave in the fight as they were cruel in their depredations. Some pause in the constant wars betwixt France and England had deprived many of those bands of their ordinary employment, and battle being their element, they came to seek it among our valleys. The air seemed on fire with the blaze of their armor, and the very sun was darkened at the flight of their arrows. They did us much evil, and we sustained the loss of more than one battle. But we met them at Buttisholz, and mingled the blood of many a rider, noble as they were called and esteemed, with that of their horses. The huge mound that covers the bones of man and steed is still called the English barrow."

Philipson was silent for a minute or two, and then replied, "Then let them sleep in peace. If they did wrong, they paid for it with their lives; and that is all the ransom that mortal man can render for his transgressions. Heaven pardon their souls!"

"Amen," replied the Landamman, "and those of all brave men! My grandsire was at the battle, and was held to have demeaned himself like a good soldier; and this bow has been ever since carefully preserved in our family. There is a prophecy about it, but I hold it not worthy of remark."

Philipson was about to inquire farther, but was interrupted by a loud cry of surprise and astonishment from without.

"I must out," said Biederman, "and see what these wild lads are doing. It is not now as formerly in this land, when the young dared not judge for themselves till the old man's voice had been heard."

He went forth from the lodge, followed by his guest. The company who had witnessed the games were all talking, shouting, and disputing in the same breath; while Arthur Philipson stood a little apart from the rest, leaning on the

"'The third killed the poor bird as it rose into the air.'"

unbent bow with apparent indifference. At the sight of the Landamman all were silent.

"What means this unwonted clamor?" he said, raising a voice to which all were accustomed to listen with reverence. "Rudiger," addressing the eldest of his sons, "has the young stranger bent the bow?"

"He has, father," said Rudiger, "and he has hit the mark. Three such shots were never shot by William Tell."

"It was chance—pure chance," said the young Swiss from Berne. "No human skill could have done it, much less a puny lad, baffled in all besides that he attempted among us."

"But what *has* been done?" said the Landamman. "Nay, speak not all at once. Anne of Geierstein, thou hast more sense and breeding than these boys—tell me how the game has gone."

The maiden seemed a little confused at this appeal; but answered with a composed and downcast look—

"The mark was, as usual, a pigeon to a pole. All the young men, except the stranger, had practised at it with the cross-bow and long-bow, without hitting it. When I brought out the bow of Buttisholz, I offered it first to my kinsmen. None would accept of it, saying, respected uncle, that a task too great for you must be far too difficult for them."

"They said well," answered Arnold Biederman; "and the stranger, did he string the bow?"

"He did, my uncle, but first he wrote something on a piece of paper, and placed it in my hands."

"And did he shoot and hit the mark?" continued the surprised Switzer.

"He first," said the maiden, "removed the pole a hundred yards farther than the post where it stood."

"Singular!" said the Landamman, "that is double the usual distance."

"He then drew the bow," continued the maiden, "and shot off, one after another, with incredible rapidity, the three arrows which he had stuck into his belt. The first cleft the pole, the second cut the string, the third killed the poor bird as it rose into the air."

"By St. Mary of Einsiedlen," said the old man, looking up in amaze, "if your eyes really saw this, they saw such archery as was never before witnessed in the Forest States!"

"I say nay to that, my revered kinsman," replied Rudolph Donnerhugel, whose vexation was apparent; "it was mere chance, if not illusion or witchery."

"What say'st thou of it thyself, Arthur," said his father, half smiling; "was thy success by chance or skill?"

"My father," said the young man, "I need not tell you that I have done but an ordinary feat for an English bowman. Nor do I speak to gratify that misproud and ignorant young man; but to our worthy host and his family I make answer. This youth charges me with having deluded men's eyes, or hit the mark by chance. For illusion, yonder is the pierced pole, the severed string, and the slain bird, they will endure sight and handling; and, besides, if that fair maiden will open the note which I put into her hand, she will find evidence to assure you that, even before I drew the bow, I had fixed upon the three marks which I designed to aim at."

"Produce the scroll, good niece," said her uncle, "and end the controversy."

"Nay, under your favor, my worthy host," said Arthur, "it is but some foolish rhymes addressed to the maiden's own eye."

"And, under your favor, sir," said the Landamman, "whatsoever is fit for my niece's eyes may greet my ears."

He took the scroll from the maiden, who blushed deeply when she resigned it. The character in which it was written was so fine that the Landamman in surprise exclaimed, "No clerk of St. Gall could have written more fairly. Strange," he again repeated, "that a hand which could draw so true a bow should have the cunning to form characters so fair." He then exclaimed anew, "Ha! verses, by Our Lady! What! have we minstrels disguised as traders?" He then opened the scroll, and read the following lines:—

> "'If I hit mast, and line, and bird
> An English archer keeps his word.
> Ah! maiden, didst thou aim at me,
> A single glance were worth the three.'

Here is rare rhyming, my worthy guest," said the Landamman, shaking his head—"fine words to make foolish maidens fain. But do not excuse it; it is your country fashion, and we know how to treat it as such." And without further allusion to the concluding couplet, the reading of which threw the poet as well as the object of the verses into some discomposure, he added gravely, "You must now allow, Rudolph Donnerhugel, that the stranger has fairly attained the three marks which he proposed to himself."

"That he has attained them is plain," answered the party to whom the appeal was made; "but that he has done this

fairly may be doubted, if there are such things as witchery and magic in this world."

"Shame—shame, Rudolph!" said the Landamman; "can spleen and envy have weight with so brave a man as you, from whom my sons ought to learn temperance, forbearance, and candor, as well as manly courage and dexterity?"

The Bernese colored high under this rebuke, to which he ventured not to attempt a reply.

"To your sports till sunset, my children," continued Arnold; "while I and my worthy friend occupy our time with a walk, for which the evening is now favorable."

"Methinks," said the English merchant, "I should like to visit the ruins of yonder castle, situated by the waterfall. There is something of melancholy dignity in such a scene which reconciles us to the misfortunes of our own time, by showing that our ancestors, who were perhaps more intelligent or more powerful, have, nevertheless, in their days, encountered cares and distresses similar to those which we now groan under."

"Have with you, my worthy sir," replied his host; "there will be time also upon the road to talk of things that you should know."

The slow step of the two elderly men carried them by degrees from the limits of the lawn, where shout, and laugh, and halloo were again revived. Young Philipson, whose success as an archer had obliterated all recollection of former failure, made other attempts to mingle in the manly pastimes of the country, and gained a considerable portion of applause. The young men who had but lately been so ready to join in ridiculing him now began so consider him as a person to be looked up and appealed to; while Rudolph Donnerhugel saw with resentment that he was no longer without a rival in the opinion of his male cousins, perhaps of his kinswoman also. The proud young Swiss reflected with bitterness that he had fallen under the Landamman's displeasure, declined in reputation with his companions, of whom he had been hitherto the leader, and even hazarded a more mortifying disappointment—all, as his swelling heart expressed it, through the means of a stranger stripling, of neither blood nor fame, who could not step from one rock to another without the encouragement of a girl.

In this irritated mood, he drew near the young Englishman, and while he seemed to address him on the chances of the sports which were still proceeding, he conveyed, in a whisper, matter of a far different tendency. Striking

Arthur's shoulder with the frank bluntness of a mountaineer, he said aloud, "Yonder bolt of Ernest whistled through the air like a falcon when she stoops down the wind!" And then proceeded in a deep low voice, "You merchants sell gloves—do you ever deal in single gauntlets, or only in pairs?"

"I *sell* no single glove," said Arthur, instantly apprehending him, and sufficiently disposed to resent the scornful looks of the Bernese champion during the time of their meal, and his having but lately imputed his successful shooting to chance or sorcery—"I *sell* no single glove, sir, but never refuse to exchange one."

"You are apt, I see," said Rudolph; "look at the players while I speak, or our purpose will be suspected. You are quicker, I say, of apprehension than I expected. If we exchange our gloves, how shall each redeem his own?"

"With our good swords," said Arthur Philipson.

"In armor, or as we stand?"

"Even as we stand," said Arthur. "I have no better garment of proof than this doublet, no other weapon than my sword; and these, sir Switzer, I hold enough for the purpose. Name time and place."

"The old castle-court at Geierstein," replied Rudolph, "the time sunrise; but we are watched. I have lost my wager, stranger," he added, speaking aloud, and in an indifferent tone of voice, "since Ulrick has made a cast beyond Ernest. There is my glove, in token I shall not forget the flask of wine."

"And there is mine," said Arthur, "in token I will drink it with you merrily."

Thus, amid the peaceful though rough sports of their companions, did these two hot-headed youths contrive to indulge their hostile inclinations towards each other, by settling a meeting of deadly purpose.

CHAPTER V

I was one
Who loved the greenwood bank and lowing herd,
The russet prize, the lowly peasant's life,
Season'd with sweet content, more than the halls
Where revelers feast to fever-height. Believe me,
There ne'er was poison mix'd in maple bowl.

Anonymous.

LEAVING the young persons engaged with their sports, the Landamman of Unterwalden and the elder Philipson walked on in company, conversing chiefly on the political relations of France, England, and Burgundy, until the conversation was changed as they entered the gate of the old castle-yard of Geierstein, where arose the lonely and dismantled keep, surrounded by the ruins of other buildings.

"This has been a proud and a strong habitation in its time," said Philipson.

"They were a proud and powerful race who held it," replied the Landamman. "The Counts of Geierstein have a history which runs back to the times of the old Helvetians, and their deeds are reported to have matched their antiquity. But all earthly grandeur has an end, and free men tread the ruins of their feudal castle, at the most distant sight of whose turrets serfs were formerly obliged to vail their bonnets, if they would escape the chastisement of contumacious rebels."

"I observe," said the merchant, "engraved on a stone under yonder turret, the crest, I conceive, of the last family —a vulture perched on a rock, descriptive, doubtless, of the word Geierstein."

"It is the ancient cognizance of the family," replied Arnold Biederman, "and, as you say, expresses the name of the castle, being the same with that of the knights who so long held it."

"I also remarked in your hall," continued the merchant, "a helmet bearing the same crest or cognizance. It is, I suppose, a trophy of the triumph of the Swiss peasants over the nobles of Geierstein, as the English bow is preserved in remembrance of the battle of Buttisholz?"

"And you, fair sir," replied the Landamman, "would, I perceive, from the prejudices of your education, regard the one victory with as unpleasant feelings as the other? Strange, that the veneration for rank should be rooted even in the minds of those who have no claim to share it! But clear up your downcast brows, my worthy guest, and be assured that, though many a proud baron's castle, when Switzerland threw off the bonds of feudal slavery, was plundered and destroyed by the just vengeance of an incensed people, such was not the lot of Geierstein. The blood of the old possessors of these towers still flows in the veins of him by whom these lands are occupied."

"What am I to understand by that, sir Landamman?" said Philipson. "Are not you yourself the occupant of this place?"

"And you think, probably," answered Arnold, "because I live like the other shepherds, wear homespun gray, and hold the plow with my own hands, I cannot be descended from a line of ancient nobility? This land holds many such gentle peasants, sir merchant; nor is there a more ancient nobility than that of which the remains are to be found in my native country. But they have voluntarily resigned the oppressive part of their feudal power, and are no longer regarded as wolves amongst the flock, but as sagacious mastiffs, who attend the sheep in time of peace, and are prompt in their defense when war threatens our community."

"But," repeated the merchant, who could not yet reconcile himself to the idea that his plain and peasant-seeming host was a man of distinguished birth, "you bear not the name, worthy sir, of your fathers. They were, you say, the Counts of Geierstein, and you are——"

"Arnold Biederman, at your command," answered the magistrate. "But know—if the knowledge can make you sup with more sense of dignity or comfort—I need but put on yonder old helmet, or, if that were too much trouble, I have only to stick a falcon's feather into my cap, and call myself Arnold Count of Geierstein. No man could gainsay me; though whether it would become my Lord Count to drive his bullocks to the pasture, and whether his Excellency the High and Well-born could, without derogation, sow a field or reap it, are questions which should be settled beforehand. I see you are confounded, my respected guest, at my degeneracy; but the state of my family is very soon explained.

"My lordly fathers ruled this same domain of Geierstein,

which in their time was very extensive, much after the mode of feudal barons—that is, they were sometimes the protectors and patrons, but oftener the oppressors, of their subjects. But when my grandfather, Heinrich of Geierstein, flourished, he not only joined the Confederates to repel Ingelram de Couci and his roving bands, as I already told you, but, when the wars with Austria were renewed, and many of his degree joined with the host of the Emperor Leopold, my ancestor adopted the opposite side, fought in front of the Confederates, and contributed by his skill and valor to the decisive victory at Sempach, in which Leopold lost his life, and the flower of Austrian chivalry fell around him. My father, Count Williewald, followed the same course, both from inclination and policy. He united himself closely with the state of Unterwalden, became a citizen of the Confederacy, and distinguished himself so much, that he was chosen landamman of the republic. He had two sons, myself and a younger brother, Albert; and possessed, as he felt himself, of a species of double character, he was desirous, perhaps unwisely—if I may censure the purpose of a deceased parent—that one of his sons should succeed him in his lordship of Geierstein, and the other support the less ostentatious, though not in my thought less honorable, condition of a free citizen of Unterwalden, possessing such influence among his equals in the canton as might be acquired by his father's merits and his own. When Albert was twelve years old, our father took us on a short excursion to Germany, where the form, pomp, and magnificence which we witnessed made a very different impression on the mind of my brother and on my own. What appeared to Albert the consummation of earthly splendor seemed to me a weary display of tiresome and useless ceremonials. Our father explained his purpose, and offered to me, as his eldest son, the large estate belonging to Geierstein, reserving such a portion of the most fertile ground as might make my brother one of the wealthiest citizens in a district where competence is esteemed wealth. The tears gushed from Albert's eyes. "And must my brother," he said, "be a noble count, honored and followed by vassals and attendants, and I a homespun peasant among the gray-bearded shepherds of Unterwalden? No, father, I respect your will, but I will not sacrifice my own rights. Geierstein is a fief held of the empire, and the laws entitle me to my equal half of the lands. If my brother be Count of Geierstein, I am not the less Count Albert of Geierstein; and I will appeal to the Emperor, rather than that the arbitrary will of

one ancestor, though he be my father, shall cancel in me the rank and rights which I have derived from a hundred." My father was greatly incensed. "Go," he said, "proud boy, give the enemy of thy country a pretext to interfere in her affairs: appeal to the will of a foreign prince from the pleasure of thy father. Go, but never again look me in the face, and dread my eternal malediction!" Albert was about to reply with vehemence, when I entreated him to be silent and hear me speak. I had, I said, all my life loved the mountain better than the plain, had been more pleased to walk than to ride, more proud to contend with shepherds in their sports than with nobles in the lists, and happier in the village dance than among the feasts of the German nobles. "Let me, therefore," I said, "be a citizen of the republic of Unterwalden—you will relieve me of a thousand cares; and let my brother Albert wear the coronet and bear the honors of Geierstein." After some further discussion, my father was at length contented to adopt my proposal, in order to attain the object which he had so much at heart. Albert was declared heir of his castle and his rank, by the title of Count Albert of Geierstein; and I was placed in possession of these fields and fertile meadows amidst which my house is situated, and my neighbors called me Arnold Biederman."

"And if Biederman," said the merchant, "means, as I understand the word, a man of worth, candor, and generosity, I know none on whom the epithet could be so justly conferred. Yet let me observe, that I praise the conduct which, in your circumstances, I could not have bowed my spirit to practise. Proceed, I pray you, with the history of your house, if the recital be not painful to you."

"I have little more to say," replied the Landamman. "My father died soon after the settlement of his estate in the manner I have told you. My brother had other possessions in Swabia and Westphalia, and seldom visited his paternal castle, which was chiefly occupied by a seneschal, a man so obnoxious to the vassals of the family that, but for the protection afforded by my near residence and relationship with his lord, he would have been plucked out of the Vulture's Nest, and treated with as little ceremony as if he had been the vulture himself. Neither, to say the truth, did my brother's occasional visits to Geierstein afford his vassals much relief, or acquire any popularity for himself. He heard with the ears and saw with the eyes of his cruel and interested steward, Ital Schreckenwald, and would not listen

even to my interference and admonition. Indeed, though he always demeaned himself with personal kindness towards me, I believe he considered me as a dull and poor-spirited clown, who had disgraced my noble blood by my mean propensities. He showed contempt on every occasion for the prejudices of his countrymen, and particularly by wearing a peacock's feather in public, and causing his followers to display the same badge, though the cognizance of the house of Austria, and so unpopular in this country, that men have been put to death for no better reason than for carrying it in their caps. In the meantime I was married to my Bertha, now a saint in Heaven, by whom I had six stately sons, five of whom you saw surrounding my table this day. Albert also married. His wife was a lady of rank in Westphalia, but his bridal-bed was less fruitful: he had only one daughter, Anne of Geierstein. Then came on the wars between the city of Zurich and our Forest Cantons, in which so much blood was shed, and when our brethren of Zurich were so ill-advised as to embrace the alliance of Austria. Their Emperor strained every nerve to avail himself of the favorable opportunity afforded by the disunion of the Swiss, and engaged all with whom he had influence to second his efforts. With my brother he was but too successful; for Albert not only took arms in the Emperor's cause, but admitted into the strong fortress of Geierstein a band of Austrian soldiers, with whom the wicked Ital Schreckenwald laid waste the whole country, excepting my little patrimony."

"It came to a severe pass with you, my worthy host," said the merchant, "since you were to decide against the cause of your country or that of your brother."

"I did not hesitate," continued Arnold Beiderman. "My brother was in the Emperor's army, and I was not therefore reduced to act personally against him; but I denounce war against the robbers and thieves with whom Schreckenwald had filled my father's house. It was waged with various fortune. The seneschal, during my absence, burnt down my house, and slew my youngest son, who died, alas! in defense of his father's hearth. It is little to add, that my lands were wasted and my flocks destroyed. On the other hand, I succeeded, with help of a body of the peasants of Unterwalden, in storming the Castle of Geierstein. It was offered back to me by the Confederates; but I had no desire to sully the fair cause in which I had assumed arms, by enriching myself at the expense of my brother; and besides, to have dwelt in that guarded hold would have been a

penance to one the sole protectors of whose house of late years had been a latch and a shepherd's cur. The castle was therefore dismantled, as you see, by order of the elders of the canton; and I even think that, considering the uses it was too often put to, I look with more pleasure on the rugged remains of Geierstein than I ever did when it was entire and apparently impregnable."

"I can understand your feelings," said the Englishman, "though I repeat, my virtue would not perhaps have extended so far beyond the circle of my family affections. Your brother, what said he to your patrotic exertions?"

"He was, as I learnt," answered the Landamman, "dreadfully incensed, having no doubt been informed that I had taken his castle with a view to my own aggrandizement. He even swore he would renounce my kindred, seek me through the battle, and slay me with his own hand. We were, in fact, both at the battle of Freyenbach, but my brother was prevented from attempting the execution of his vindictive purpose by a wound from an arrow, which occasioned his being carried out of the mêlée. I was afterwards in the bloody and melancholy fight at Mount Hirzel, and that other onslaught at the chapel of St. Jacob, which brought our brethren of Zurich to terms, and reduced Austria once more to the necessity of making peace with us. After this war of thirteen years the Diet passed sentence of banishment for life on my brother Albert, and would have deprived him of his possessions, but forbore in consideration of what they thought my good service. When the sentence was intimated to the Count of Geierstein, he returned an answer of defiance; yet a singular circumstance showed us not long afterwards that he retained an attachment to his country, and, amidst his resentment against me his brother, did justice to my unaltered affection for him."

"I would pledge my credit," said the merchant, "that what follows relates to yonder fair maiden, your niece?"

"You guess rightly," said the Landamman. "For some time we heard, though indistinctly—for we have, as you know, but little communication with foreign countries—that my brother was high in favor at the court of the Emperor, but latterly that he had fallen under suspicion, and in the course of some of those revolutions common at the courts of princes, had been driven into exile. It was shortly after this news, and, as I think, more than seven years ago, that I was returning from hunting on the further side of the river, had passed the narrow bridge as usual, and was

walking through the courtyard which we have lately left (for their walk was now turned homeward), when a voice said, in the German language, 'Uncle, have compassion upon me!' As I looked around, I beheld a girl of ten years old approach timidly from the shelter of the ruins and kneel down at my feet. 'Uncle, spare my life,' she said, holding up her little hands in the act of supplication, while mortal terror was painted upon her countenance. 'Am I your uncle, little maiden?' said I; 'and if I am, why should you fear me?' 'Because you are the head of the wicked and base clowns who delight to spill noble blood,' replied the girl, with a courage which surprised me. 'What is your name, my little maiden?' said I; 'and who, having planted in your mind opinions so unfavorable to your kinsman, has brought you hither, to see if he resembles the picture you have received of him?' 'It was Ital Schreckenwald that brought me hither,' said the girl, only half comprehending the nature of my question. 'Ital Schreckenwald!' I repeated, shocked at the name of a wretch I have so much reason to hate. A voice from the ruins, like that of a sullen echo from the grave answered, 'Ital Schreckenwald!' and the caitiff issued from his place of concealment, and stood before me, with that singular indifference to danger which he unites to his atrocity of character. I had my spiked mountain-staff in my hand—what should I have done, or what would you have done, under like circumstances?"

"I would have laid him on the earth, with his skull shivered like an icicle!" said the Englishman, fiercely.

"I had well-nigh done so," replied the Swiss, "but he was unarmed, a messenger from my brother, and therefore no object of revenge. His own undismayed and audacious conduct contributed to save him. 'Let the vassal of the noble and high-born Count of Geierstein hear the words of his master, and let him look that they are obeyed,' said the insolent ruffian. 'Doff thy cap and listen; for, though the voice is mine, the words are those of the noble count.' 'God and man know,' replied I, 'if I owe my brother respect or homage; it is much if, in respect for him, I defer paying to his messenger the meed I dearly owe him. Proceed with thy tale, and rid me of thy hateful presence.' 'Albert Count of Geierstein, thy lord and my lord,' proceeded Schreckenwald, 'having on his hand wars and other affairs of weight, sends his daughter, the Countess Anne, to thy charge, and graces thee so far as to entrust to thee her

support and nurture, until it shall suit his purposes to require her back from thee; and he desires that thou apply to her maintenance the rents and profits of the lands of Geierstein, which thou hast usurped from him.' 'Ital Schreckenwald,' I replied, 'I will not stop to ask if this mode of addressing me be according to my brother's directions or thine own insolent pleasure. If circumstances have, as thou sayest, deprived my niece of her natural protector, I will be to her as a father, nor shall she want aught which I have to give her. The lands of Geierstein are forfeited to the state, the castle is ruinous, as thou seest, and it is much of thy crimes that the house of my fathers is desolate. But where I dwell Anne of Geierstein shall dwell, as my children fare shall she fare, and she shall be to me as a daughter. And now thou hast thine errand. Go hence, if thou lovest thy life; for it is unsafe parleying with the father when thy hands are stained with the blood of the son.' The wretch retired as I spoke, but took his leave with his usual determined insolence of manner. 'Farewell,' he said, 'Count of the Plough and Harrow—farewell, noble companion of paltry burghers!' He disappeared, and released me from the strong temptation under which I labored, and which urged me to stain with his blood the place which had witnessed his cruelty and his crimes. I conveyed my niece to my house, and soon convinced her that I was her sincere friend. I inured her, as if she had been my daughter, to all our mountain exercises; and while she excels in these the damsels of the district, there burst from her such sparkles of sense and courage, mingled with delicacy, as belong not—I must needs own the truth—to the simple maidens of these wild hills, but relish of a nobler stem and higher breeding. Yet they are so happily mixed with simplicity and courtesy, that Anne of Geierstein is justly considered as the pride of the district; nor do I doubt but that, if she should make a worthy choice of a husband, the state would assign her a large dower out of her father's possessions, since it is not our maxim to punish the child for the faults of the parent."

"It will naturally be your anxious desire, my worthy host," replied the Englishman, "to secure to your niece, in whose praises I have deep cause to join with a grateful voice, such a suitable match as her birth and expectations, but above all her merit, demand."

"It is, my good guest," said the Landamman, "that which hath often occupied my thoughts. The over-near relation-

ship prohibits what would have been my most earnest desire, the hope of seeing her wedded to one of my own sons. This young man, Rudolph Donnerhugel, is brave, and highly esteemed by his fellow-citizens ; but more ambitious, and more desirous of distinction, than I would desire for my niece's companion through life. His temper is violent, though his heart, I trust, is good. But I am like to be unpleasantly released from all care on this score, since my brother, having, as it seemed, forgotten Anne for seven years and upwards, has, by a letter which I have lately received, demanded that she shall be restored to him. You can read, my worthy sir, for your profession requires it. See, here is the scroll, coldly worded, but far less unkindly than his unbrotherly message by Ital Schreckenwald. Read it, I pray you, aloud."

The merchant read accordingly.

"'BROTHER—I thank you for the care you have taken of my daughter, for she has been in safety when she would otherwise have been in peril, and kindly used when she would have been in hardship. I now entreat you to restore her to me, and trust that she will come with the virtues which become a woman in every station, and a disposition to lay aside the habits of a Swiss villager for the graces of a high-born maiden. Adieu. I thank you once more for your care, and would repay it were it in my power ; but you need nothing I can give, having renounced the rank to which you were born, and made your nest on the ground, where the storm passes over you. I rest your brother, GEIERSTEIN."

It is addressed 'To Count Arnold of Geierstein, called Arnold Biederman.' A postscript requires you to send the maiden to the court of the Duke of Burgundy. This, good sir, appears to me the language of a haughty man, divided betwixt the recollection of old offense and recent obligation. The speech of his messenger was that of a malicious vassal, desirous of venting his own spite under pretense of doing his lord's errand."

"I so receive both," replied Arnold Biederman.

"And do you intend," continued the merchant, "to resign this beautiful and interesting creature to the conduct of her father, wilful as he seems to be, without knowing what his condition is, or what his power of protecting her ?"

The Landamman hastened to reply. "The tie which unites the parent to the child is the earliest and the most hallowed that binds the human race. The difficulty of her

traveling in safety has hitherto prevented my attempting to carry my brother's instructions into execution. But, as I am now likely to journey in person towards the court of Charles, I have determined that Anne shall accompany me; and as I will myself converse with my brother, whom I have not seen for many years, I shall learn his purpose respecting his daughter, and it may be I may prevail on Albert to suffer her to remain under my charge. And now, sir, having told you of my family affairs at some greater length than was necessary, I must crave your attention, as a wise man, to what farther I have to say. You know the disposition which young men and women naturally have to talk, jest, and sport with each other, out of which practise arise often more serious attachments, which they call loving *par amours.* I trust, if we are to travel together, you will so school your young man as to make him aware that Anne of Geierstein cannot, with propriety on her part, be made the object of his thoughts or attention."

The merchant colored with resentment, or something like it. "I asked not to join your company, sir Landamman—it was you who requested mine," he said: "if my son and I have since become in any respect the objects of your suspicion, we will gladly pursue our way separately."

"Nay, be not angry, worthy guest," said the Landamman; "we Switzers do not rashly harbor suspicions; and that we may not harbor them, we speak respecting the circumstances out of which they might arise more plainly than is the wont of more civilized countries. When I proposed to you to be my companion on the journey, to speak the truth, though it may displease a father's ear, I regarded your son as a soft, faint-hearted youth, who was, as yet at least, too timid and milky-blooded to attract either respect or regard from the maidens. But a few hours have presented him to us in the character of such a one as is sure to interest them. He has accomplished the emprise of the bow, long thought unattainable, and with which a popular report connects an idle prophecy. He has wit to make verses, and knows doubtless how to recommend himself by other accomplishments which bind young persons to each other, though they are lightly esteemed by men whose beards are mixed with gray, like yours, friend merchant, and mine own. Now, you must be aware that, since my brother broke terms with me simply for preferring the freedom of a Swiss citizen to the tawdry and servile condition of a German courtier, he will not approve of any one looking towards his daughter who hath not the

advantage of noble blood, or who hath what he would call debased himself by attention to merchandise, to the cultivation of land—in a word, to any art that is useful. Should your son love Anne of Geierstein, he prepares for himself danger and disappointment. And now you know the whole, I ask you—do we travel together or apart?"

"Even as ye list, my worthy host," said Philipson, in an indifferent tone; "for me, I can but say that such an attachment as you speak of would be as contrary to my wishes as to those of your brother, or what I suppose are your own. Arthur Philipson has duties to perform totally inconsistent with his playing the gentle bachelor to any maiden in Switzerland, take Germany to boot, whether of high or low degree. He is an obedient son besides—hath never seriously disobeyed my commands, and I will have an eye upon his motions."

"Enough, my friend," said the Landamman; "we travel together, then, and I willingly keep my original purpose, being both pleased and instructed by your discourse."

Then, changing the conversation, he began to ask whether his acquaintance thought that the league entered into by the King of England and the Duke of Burgundy would continue stable. "We hear much," continued the Swiss, "of the immense army with which King Edward proposes the recovery of the English dominions in France."

"I am well aware," said Philipson, "that nothing can be so popular in my country as the invasion of France, and the attempt to reconquer Normandy, Maine, and Gascony, the ancient appanages of our English crown. But I greatly doubt whether the voluptuous usurper who now calls himself king will be graced by Heaven with success in such an adventure. This fourth Edward is brave indeed, and has gained every battle in which he drew his sword, and they have been many in number. But since he reached, through a bloody path, to the summit of his ambition, he has shown himself rather a sensual debauchee than a valiant knight; and it is my firm belief that not even the chance of recovering all the fair dominions which were lost during the civil wars excited by his ambitious house will tempt him to exchange the soft beds of London, with sheets of silk and pillows of down, and the music of a dying lute to lull him to rest, for the turf of France and the reveille of an alarm trumpet."

"It is the better for us should it prove so," said the Landamman; "for if England and Burgundy were to dismember

France, as in our father's days was nearly accomplished, Duke Charles would then have leisure to exhaust his long-hoarded vengeance against our confederacy."

As they conversed thus, they attained once more the lawn in front of Arnold Biederman's mansion, where the contention of the young men had given place to the dance performed by the young persons of both sexes. The dance was led by Anne of Geierstein and the youthful stranger; which, although it was the most natural arrangement, where the one was a guest and the other represented the mistress of the family, occasioned the Landamman's exchanging a glance with the elder Philipson, as if it had held some relation to the suspicions he had recently expressed.

But so soon as her uncle and his elder guest appeared, Anne of Geierstein took the earliest opportunity of a pause to break off the dance, and to enter into conversation with her kinsman, as if on the domestic affairs under her attendance. Philipson observed that his host listened seriously to his niece's communication; and, nodding in his frank manner, seemed to intimate that her request should receive a favorable consideration.

The family were presently afterwards summoned to attend the evening meal, which consisted chiefly of the excellent fish afforded by the neighboring streams and lakes. A large cup containing what was called the *schlaftrunk*, or sleeping drink, then went round, which was first quaffed by the master of the household, then modestly tasted by the maiden, next pledged by the two strangers, and finally emptied by the rest of the company. Such were then the sober manners of the Swiss, afterwards corrupted by their intercourse with more luxurious regions. The guests were conducted to the sleeping apartments, where Philipson and young Arthur occupied the same couch, and shortly after the whole inhabitants of the household were locked in sound repose.

CHAPTER VI

When we two meet, we meet like rushing torrents;
Like warring winds, like flames from various points,
That mate each other's fury—there is nought
Of elemental strife, were fiends to guide it,
Can match the wrath of man

Frenaud.

THE elder of our two travelers, though a strong man and familiar with fatigue, slept sounder and longer than usual on the morning which was now beginning to dawn, but his son Arthur had that upon his mind which early interrupted his repose.

The encounter with the bold Switzer, a chosen man of a renowned race of warriors, was an engagement which, in the opinion of the period in which he lived, was not to be delayed or broken. He left his father's side, avoiding as much as possible the risk of disturbing him, though even in that case the circumstance would not have excited any attention, as he was in the habit of rising early, in order to make preparations for the day's journey, to see that the guide was on his duty, and that the mule had his provender, and to discharge similar offices which might otherwise have given trouble to his father. The old man, however, fatigued with the exertions of the preceding day, slept, as we have said, more soundly than his wont, and Arthur, arming himself with his good sword, sallied out to the lawn in front of the Landamman's dwelling, amid the magic dawn of a beautiful harvest morning in the Swiss mountains.

The sun was just about to kiss the top of the most gigantic of that race of Titans, though the long shadows still lay on the rough grass, which crisped under the young man's feet with a strong intimation of frost. But Arthur looked not around on the landscape, however lovely, which lay waiting one flash from the orb of day to start into brilliant existence. He drew the belt of his trusty sword which he was in the act of fastening when he left the house, and ere he had secured the buckle, he was many paces on his way towards the place where he was to use it.

It was still the custom of that military period to regard a

summons to combat as a sacred engagement, preferable to all other which could be formed ; and stifling whatever inward feelings of reluctance nature might oppose to the dictates of fashion, the step of a gallant to the place of encounter was required to be as free and ready as if he had been going to a bridal. I do not know whether this alacrity was altogether real on the part of Arthur Philipson ; but if it were otherwise, neither his look nor pace betrayed the secret.

Having hastily traversed the fields and groves which separated the Landamman's residence from the old castle of Geierstein, he entered the courtyard from the side where the castle overlooked the land ; and nearly in the same instant his almost gigantic antagonist, who looked yet more tall and burly by the pale morning light than he had seemed the preceding evening, appeared ascending from the precarious bridge beside the torrent, having reached Geierstein by a different route from that pursued by the Englishman.

The young champion of Berne had hanging along his back one of those huge two-handed swords, the blade of which measured five feet, and which were wielded with both hands. These were almost universally used by the Swiss ; for, besides the impression which such weapons were calculated to make upon the array of the German men-at-arms, whose armor was impenetrable to lighter swords, they were also well calculated to defend mountain passes, where the great bodily strength and agility of those who bore them enabled the combatants, in spite of their weight and length, to use them with much address and effect. One of these gigantic swords hung round Rudolph Donnerhugel's neck, the point rattling against his heel, and the handle extending itself over his left shoulder, considerably above his head. He carried another in his hand.

"Thou art punctual," he called out to Arthur Philipson, in a voice which was distinctly heard above the roar of the waterfall, which it seemed to rival in sullen force. "But I judged thou wouldst come without a two-handed sword. There is my kinsman Ernest's he said, throwing on the ground the weapon which he carried, with the hilt towards the young Englishman. "Look, stranger, that thou disgrace it not, for my kinsman will never forgive me if thou dost. Or thou mayst have mine if thou likest it better."

The Englishman looked at the weapon with some surprise, to the use of which he was totally unaccustomed.

"The challenger," he said, "in all countries where honor is known accepts the arms of the challenged."

"He who fights on a Swiss mountain fights with a Swiss brand," answered Rudolph. "Think you our hands are made to handle penknives?"

"Nor are ours made to wield scythes," said Arthur; and muttered betwixt his teeth, as he looked at the sword, which the Swiss continued to offer him—"*Usum non habeo*: I have not proved the weapon."

"Do you repent the bargain you have made?" said the Swiss; "if so cry craven, and return in safety. Speak plainly, instead of prattling Latin like a clerk or a shaven monk."

"No, proud man," replied the Englishman, "I ask thee no forbearance. I thought but of a combat between a shepherd and a giant, in which God gave the victory to him who had worse odds of weapons than falls to my lot to-day. I will fight as I stand: my own good sword shall serve my need now, as it has done before."

"Content! But blame not me who offered thee equality of weapons," said the mountaineer. "And now hear me. This is a fight for life or death; yon waterfall sounds the alarum for our conflict. Yes, old bellower," he continued, looking back, "it is long since thou hast heard the noise of battle. And look at it ere we begin, stranger, for, if you fall, I will commit your body to its waters."

"And if thou fall'st, proud Swiss," answered Arthur, "as well I trust thy presumption leads to destruction, I will have thee buried in the church at Einsiedlen, where the priests shall sing masses for thy soul; thy two-handed sword shall be displayed above thy grave, and a scroll shall tell the passenger, 'Here lies a bear's cub of Berne, slain by Arthur the Englishman.'"

"The stone is not in Switzerland, rocky as it is," said Rudolph, scornfully, "that shall bear that inscription. Prepare thyself for battle."

The Englishman cast a calm and deliberate glance around the scene of action—a courtyard, partly open, partly encumbered with ruins, in less and larger masses.

"Methinks," said he to himself, "a master of his weapon, with the instructions of Bottaferma of Florence in his remembrance, a light heart, a good blade, a firm hand, and a just cause, might make up a worse odds than two feet of steel."

Thinking thus, and imprinting on his mind, as much as the time would permit, every circumstance of the locality around him which promised advantage in the combat, and taking his station in the middle of the courtyard where the

ground was entirely clear, he flung his cloak from him and drew his sword.

Rudolph had at first believed that his foreign antagonist was an effeminate youth, who would be swept from before him at the first flourish of his tremendous weapon. But the firm and watchful attitude assumed by the young man reminded the Swiss of the deficiencies of his own unwieldy implement, and made him determine to avoid any precipitation which might give advantage to an enemy who seemed both daring and vigilant. He unsheathed his huge sword, by drawing it over the left shoulder—an operation which required some little time, and might have offered formidable advantage to his antagonist, had Arthur's sense of honor permitted him to begin the attack ere it was completed. The Englishman remained firm, however, until the Swiss, displaying his bright brand to the morning sun, made three or four flourishes as if to prove its weight and the facility with which he wielded it, then stood firm within sword-stroke of his adversary, grasping his weapon with both hands, and advancing it a little before his body, with the blade pointed straight upwards. The Englishman, on the contrary, carried his sword in one hand, holding it across his face in a horizontal position, so as to be at once ready to strike, thrust, or parry.

"Strike, Englishman!" said the Switzer, after they had confronted each other in this manner for about a minute.

"The longest sword should strike first," said Arthur; and the words had not left his mouth when the Swiss sword rose, and descended with a rapidity which, the weight and size of the weapon considered, appeared portentous. No parry, however dexterously interposed, could have baffled the ruinous descent of that dreadful weapon, by which the champion of Berne had hoped at once to begin the battle and end it. But young Philipson had not over-estimated the justice of his own eye or the activity of his limbs. Ere the blade descended, a sudden spring to one side carried him from beneath its heavy sway, and before the Swiss could again raise his sword aloft, he received a wound, though a slight one, upon the left arm. Irritated at the failure and at the wound, the Switzer heaved up his sword once more, and availing himself of a strength corresponding to his size, he discharged towards his adversary a succession of blows, downright, athwart, horizontal, and from left to right, with such surprising strength and velocity, that it required all the address of the young Englishman, by parrying, shifting,

eluding, or retreating, to evade a storm of which every individual blow seemed sufficient to cleave a solid rock. The Englishman was compelled to give ground, now backwards, now swerving to the one side or the other, now availing himself of the fragments of the ruins, but watching all the while, with the utmost composure, the moment when the strength of his enraged enemy might become somewhat exhausted, or when by some improvident or furious blow he might again lay himself open to a close attack. The latter of these advantages had nearly occurred, for, in the middle of his headlong charge, the Switzer stumbled over a large stone concealed among the long grass, and, ere he could recover himself, received a severe blow across the head from his antagonist. It lighted upon his bonnet, the lining of which inclosed a small steel cap, so that he escaped unwounded, and, springing up, renewed the battle with unabated fury, though it seemed to the young Englishman with breath somewhat short, and blows dealt with more caution.

They were still contending with equal fortune, when a stern voice, rising over the clash of swords, as well as the roar of waters, called out in a commanding tone, "On your lives, forbear!"

The two combatants sunk the points of their swords, not very sorry, perhaps, for the interruption of a strife which must otherwise have had a deadly termination. They looked round, and the Landamman stood before them, with anger frowning on his broad and expressive forehead.

"How now, boys!" he said; "are you guests of Arnold Biederman, and do you dishonor his house by acts of violence more becoming the wolves of the mountains than beings to whom the great Creator has given a form after His own likeness and an immortal soul to be saved by penance and repentance?"

"Arthur," said the elder Philipson, who had come up at the same time with their host, "what frenzy is this? Are your duties of so light and heedless a nature as to give time and place for quarrels and combats with every idle boor who chances to be boastful at once and bull-headed?"

The young men, whose strife had ceased at the entrance of these unexpected spectators, stood looking at each other and resting on their swords.

"Rudolph Donnerhugel," said the Landamman, "give thy sword to me—to me, the owner of this ground, the master of this family, and magistrate of the canton."

"And which is more," answered Rudolph, submissively,

"to you who are Arnold Biederman, at whose command every native of these mountains draws his sword or sheathes it."

He gave his two-handed sword to the Landamman.

"Now, by my honest word," said Biederman, "it is the same with which thy father Stephen fought so gloriously at Sempach, abreast with the famous De Winkelried! Shame it is that it should be drawn on a helpless stranger. And you, young sir," continued the Swiss, addressing Arthur, while his father said at the same time, "Young man, yield up your sword to the Landamman."

"It shall not need, sir," replied the young Englishman, "since, for my part, I hold our strife at an end. This gallant gentleman called me hither on a trial, as I conceive, of courage: I can give my unqualified testimony to his gallantry and swordmanship; and, as I trust he will say nothing to the shame of my manhood, I think our strife has lasted long enough for the purpose which gave rise to it."

"Too long for me," said Rudolph, frankly: "the green sleeve of my doublet, which I wore of that color out of my love to the Forest Cantons, is now stained into as dirty a crimson as could have been done by any dyer in Ypres or Ghent. But I heartily forgive the brave stranger who has spoiled my jerkin, and given its master a lesson he will not soon forget. Had all Englishmen been like your guest, worthy kinsman, methinks the mound at Buttisholz had hardly risen so high."

"Cousin Rudolph," said the Landamman, smoothing his brow as his kinsman spoke, "I have ever thought thee as generous as thou art harebrained and quarrelsome; and you, my young guest, may rely that, when a Swiss says the quarrel is over, there is no chance of its being renewed. We are not like the men of the valleys to the eastward, who nurse revenge as if it were a favorite child. And now join hands, my children, and let us forget this foolish feud."

"Here is my hand, brave stranger," said Donnerhugel; "thou has taught me a trick of fence, and when we have broken our fast, we will, by your leave, to the forest, where I will teach you a trick of woodcraft in return. When your foot hath half the experience of your hand, and your eye hath gained a portion of the steadiness of your heart, you will not find many hunters to match you."

Arthur, with all the ready confidence of youth, readily embraced a proposition so frankly made, and before they reached the house various subjects of sport were eagerly dis-

cussed between them, with as much cordiality as if no disturbance of their concord had taken place.

"Now this," said the Landamman, "is as it should be. I am ever ready to forgive the headlong impetuosity of our youth, if they will be but manly and open in their reconciliation, and bear their heart on their tongue, as a true Swiss should."

"These two youths had made but wild work of it, however," said Philipson, "had not your care, my worthy host, learned of their rendezvous, and called me to assist in breaking their purpose. May I ask how it came to your knowledge so opportunely?"

"It was e'en through means of my domestic fairy," answered Arnold Biederman, "who seems born for the good luck of my family—I mean my niece, Anne, who had observed a glove exchanged betwixt the two young braggadocios, and heard them mention Geierstein and break of day. O, sir, it is much to see a woman's sharpness of wit! It would have been long enough ere any of my thick-headed sons had shown themselves so apprehensive."

"I think I see our propitious protectress peeping at us from yonder high ground," said Philipson; "but it seems as if she would willingly observe us without being seen in return."

"Ay," said the Landamman, "she has been looking out to see that there has been no hurt done; and now, I warrant me, the foolish girl is ashamed of having shown such a laudable degree of interest in a matter of the kind."

"Methinks," said the Englishman, "I would willingly return my thanks in your presence, to the fair maiden to whom I have been so highly indebted."

"There can be no better time than the present," said the Landamman; and he sent through the groves the maiden's name, in one of those shrilly accented tones which we have already noticed.

Anne of Geierstein, as Philipson had before observed, was stationed upon a knoll at some distance, and concealed, as she thought, from notice by a screen of brushwood. She started at her uncle's summons, therefore, but presently obeyed it; and, avoiding the young men, who passed on foremost, she joined the Landamman and Philipson by a circuitous path through the woods.

"My worthy friend and guest would speak with you, Anne," said the Landamman, so soon as the morning greeting had been exchanged. The Swiss maiden colored over

brow as well as cheek when Philipson, with a grace which seemed beyond his calling, addressed her in these words—

"It happens sometimes to us merchants, my fair young friend, that we are unlucky enough not to possess means for the instant defraying of our debts; but he is justly held amongst us as the meanest of mankind who does not acknowledge them. Accept, therefore, the thanks of a father whose son your courage, only yesterday, saved from destruction, and whom your prudence has, this very morning, rescued from a great danger. And grieve me not by refusing to wear these ear-rings," he added, producing a small jewel-case, which he opened as he spoke; "they are, it is true, only of pearls, but they have not been thought unworthy the ears of a countess——"

"And must, therefore," said the old Landamman, "show misplaced on the person of a Swiss maiden of Unterwallen; for such and no more is my niece Anne while she resides in my solitude. Methinks, good Master Philipson, you display less than your usual judgment in matching the quality of your gifts with the rank of her on whom they are bestowed; as a merchant, too, you should remember that large guerdons will lighten your gains."

"Let me crave your pardon, my good host," answered the Englishman, "while I reply, that at least I have consulted my own sense of the obligation under which I labor, and have chosen, out of what I have at my free disposal, that which I thought might best express it. I trust the host whom I have found hitherto so kind will not prevent this young maiden from accepting what is at least not unbecoming the rank she is born to; and you will judge me unjustly if you think me capable of doing either myself or you the wrong of offering any token of a value beyond what I can well spare."

The Landamman took the jewel-case into his own hand.

"I have ever set my countenance," he said, "against gaudy gems, which are leading us daily further astray from the simplicity of our fathers and mothers. And yet," he added, with a good-humored smile, and holding one of the ear-rings close to his relation's face, "the ornaments do set off the wench rarely, and they say girls have more pleasure in wearing such toys than gray-haired men can comprehend; wherefore, dear Anne, as thou has deserved a dearer trust in a greater matter, I refer thee entirely to thine own wisdom, to accept of our good friend's costly present and wear it or not as thou thinkest fit."

"Since such is your pleasure, my best friend and kinsman," said the young maiden, blushing as she spoke, "I will not give pain to our valued guest by refusing what he desires so earnestly that I should accept; but, by his leave, good uncle, and yours, I will bestow these splendid ear-rings on the shrine of Our Lady of Einsiedlen, to express our general gratitude to her protecting favor, which has been around us in the terrors of yesterday's storm and the alarms of this morning's discord."

"By Our Lady, the wench speaks sensibly!" said the Landamman; "and her wisdom has applied the bounty well, my good guest, to bespeak prayers for the family and mine, and for the general peace of Unterwalden. Go to, Anne, thou shalt have a necklace of jet at next shearing-feast if our fleeces bear any price in the market."

CHAPTER VII

Let him who will not proffer'd peace receive
Be sated with the plagues which war can give;
And well thy hatred of the peace is known,
If now thy soul reject the friendship shown.

HOOLE'S *Tasso.*

THE confidence betwixt the Landamman and the English merchant appeared to increase during the course of a few busy days, which occurred before that appointed for the commencement of their journey to the court of Charles of Burgundy. The state of Europe, and of the Helvetian Confederacy, has been already alluded to ; but, for the distinct explanation of our story, may be here briefly recapitulated.

In the interval of a week, whilst the English travelers remained at Geirestein, meetings or diets were held, as well of the City Cantons of the Confederacy as of those of the Forest. The former, aggrieved by the taxes imposed on their commerce by the Duke of Burgundy, rendered yet more intolerable by the violence of the agents whom he employed in such oppression, were eager for war, in which they had hitherto uniformly found victory and wealth. Many of them were also privately instigated to arms by the largesses of Louis XI., who spared neither intrigues nor gold to effect a breach betwixt these dauntless confederates and his formidable enemy, Charles the Bold.

On the other hand, there were many reasons which appeared to render it impolitic for the Switzers to engage in war with one of the most wealthy, most obstinate, and most powerful princes in Europe—for such unquestionably was Charles of Burgundy—without the existence of some strong reason affecting their own honor and independence. Every day brought fresh intelligence from the interior, that Edward the Fourth of England had entered into a strict and intimate alliance, offensive and defensive, with the Duke of Burgundy, and that it was the purpose of the English king, renowned for his numerous victories over the rival house of Lancaster, by which, after various reverses, he had obtained undisputed possession of the throne, to reassert his claims to those prov-

inces of France so long held by his ancestors. It seemed as if this alone were wanting to his fame, and that, having subdued his internal enemies, he now turned his eyes to the regaining of those rich and valuable foreign possessions which had been lost during the administration of the feeble Henry VI. and the civil discords so dreadfully prosecuted in the wars of the White and Red Roses. It was universally known that, throughout England generally, the loss of the French provinces was felt as a national degradation; and that not only the nobility, who had in consequence been deprived of the large fiefs which they had held in Normandy, Gascony, Maine, and Anjou, but the warlike gentry, accustomed to gain both fame and wealth at the expense of France, and the fiery yeomanry, whose bows had decided so many fatal battles, were as eager to renew the conflict as their ancestors of Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt had been to follow their sovereign to the fields of victory, on which their deeds had conferred deathless renown.

The latest and most authentic intelligence bore, that the King of England was on the point of passing to France in person (an invasion rendered easy by his possession of Calais), with an army superior in numbers and discipline to any with which an English monarch had ever before entered that kingdom; that all the hostile preparations were completed; and that the arrival of Edward might instantly be expected; whilst the powerful co-operation of the Duke of Burgundy, and the assistance of numerous disaffected French noblemen in the provinces which had been so long under the English dominion, threatened a fearful issue of the war to Louis XI., sagacious, wise, and powerful as that prince unquestionably was.

It would no doubt have been the wisest policy of Charles of Burgundy, when thus engaged in an alliance against his most formidable neighbor, and hereditary as well as personal enemy, to have avoided all cause of quarrel with the Helvetian Confederacy, a poor but most warlike people, who already had been taught by repeated successes to feel that their hardy infantry could, if necessary, engage on terms of equality, or even of advantage, the flower of that chivalry which had hitherto been considered as forming the strength of European battle. But the measures of Charles, whom fortune had opposed to the most astucious and politic monarch of his time, were always dictated by passionate feeling and impulse, rather than by a judicious consideration of the circumstances in which he stood. Haughty, proud, and uncompromising,

though neither destitute of honor nor generosity, he despised and hated what he termed the paltry associations of herdsmen and shepherds, united with a few towns which subsisted chiefly by commerce ; and instead of courting the Helvetian cantons, like his crafty enemy, or at least affording them no ostensible pretense of quarrel, he omitted no opportunity of showing the disregard and contempt in which he held their upstart consequence, and of evincing the secret longing which he entertained to take vengeance upon them for the quantity of noble blood which they had shed, and to compensate the repeated successes they had gained over the feudal lords, of whom he imagined himself the destined avenger.

The Duke of Burgundy's possessions in the Alsatian territory afforded him many opportunities for wreaking his displeasure upon the Swiss League. The little castle and town of Ferette, lying within ten or eleven miles of Bâle, served as a thoroughfare to the traffic of Berne and Soleure, the two principal towns of the confederation. In this place the Duke posted a governor, or seneschal, who was also an administrator of the revenue, and seemed born on purpose to be the plague and scourge of his republican neighbors.

Archibald van Hagenbach was a German noble, whose possessions lay in Swabia, and was universally esteemed one of the fiercest and most lawless of that frontier nobility known by the name of robber-knights and robber-counts. These dignitaries, because they held their fiefs of the Holy Roman Empire, claimed as complete sovereignty within their territories of a mile square as any reigning prince of Germany in his more extended dominions. They levied tolls and taxes on strangers, and imprisoned, tried, and executed those who, as they alleged, had committed offenses within their petty domains. But especially, and in further exercise of their seignorial privileges, they made war on each other, and on the free cities of the Empire, attacking and plundering without mercy the caravans, or large trains of wagons, by which the internal commerce of Germany was carried on.

A succession of injuries done and received by Archibald of Hagenbach, who had been one of the fiercest sticklers for this privilege of *faustracht* or club-law, as it may be termed, had ended in his being obliged, though somewhat advanced in life, to leave a country where his tenure of existence was become extremely precarious, and to engage in the service of the Duke of Burgundy, who willingly employed him, as

he was a man of high descent and proved valor, and not the less, perhaps, that he was sure to find, in a man of Hagenbach's fierce, rapacious, and haughty disposition, the unscrupulous executioner of whatsoever severities it might be his master's pleasure to enjoin.

The traders of Berne and Soleure, accordingly, made loud and violent complaints of Hagenbach's exactions. The impositions laid on commodities which passed through his district of La Ferette, to whatever place they might be ultimately bound, were arbitrarily increased, and the merchants and traders who hesitated to make instant payment of what was demanded were exposed to imprisonment and personal punishment. The commercial towns of Germany appealed to the Duke against this iniquitous conduct on the part of the governor of La Ferette, and requested of his Grace's goodness that he would withdraw Von Hagenbach from their neighborhood ; but the Duke treated their complaints with contempt. The Swiss League carried their remonstrances higher, and required that justice should be done on the governor of La Ferette, as having offended against the law of nations ; but they were equally unable to attract attention or obtain redress.

At length the Diet of the Confederation determined to send the solemn deputation which has been repeatedly mentioned. One or two of these envoys joined with the calm and prudent Arnold Biederman in the hope that so solemn a measure might open the eyes of the Duke to the wicked injustice of his representative ; others among the deputies, having no such peaceful views, were determined, by this resolute remonstrance, to pave the way for hostilities.

Arnold Biederman was an especial advocate for peace, while its preservation was compatible with national independence and the honor of the Confederacy ; but the younger Philipson soon discovered that the Landamman alone, of all his family, cherished these moderate views. The opinion of his sons had been swayed and seduced by the impetuous eloquence and overbearing influence of Rudolph of Donnerhugel, who, by some feats of peculiar gallantry, and the consideration due to the merit of his ancestors, had acquired an influence in the councils of his native canton, and with the youth of the League in general, beyond what was usually yielded by these wise republicans to men of his early age. Arthur, who was now an acceptable and welcome companion of all their hunting-parties and other sports, heard nothing among the young men but anticipations of war, rendered

delightful by the hopes of booty and of distinction which were to be obtained by the Switzers. The feats of their ancestors against the Germans had been so wonderful as to realize the fabulous victories of romance; and while the present race possessed the same hardy limbs, and the same inflexible courage, they eagerly anticipated the same distinguished success. When the governor of La Ferette was mentioned in the conversation, he was usually spoken of as the bandog of Burgundy, or the Alsatian mastiff; and intimations were openly given that, if his course were not instantly checked by his master, and he himself withdrawn from the frontiers of Switzerland, Archibald of Hagenbach would find his fortress no protection from the awakened indignation of the wronged inhabitants of Soleure, and particularly of those of Berne.

This general disposition to war among the young Switzers was reported to the elder Philipson by his son, and led him at one time to hesitate whether he ought not rather to resume all the inconveniences and dangers of a journey accompanied only by Arthur than run the risk of the quarrels in which he might be involved by the unruly conduct of these fierce mountain youths, after they should have left their own frontiers. Such an event would have had, in a peculiar degree, the effect of destroying every purpose of his journey; but, respected as Arnold Biederman was by his family and countrymen, the English merchant concluded, upon the whole, that his influence would be able to restrain his companions until the great question of peace or war should be determined, and especially until they should have discharged their commission by obtaining an audience of the Duke of Burgundy; and after this he should be separated from their society, and not liable to be engaged in any responsibility for their ulterior measures.

After a delay of about ten days, the deputation commissioned to remonstrate with the Duke on the aggressions and exactions of Archibald of Hagenbach at length assembled at Geierstein from whence the members were to journey forth together. They were three in number, besides the young Bernese and the Landamman of Unterwalden. One was, like Arnold, a proprietor from the Forest Cantons, wearing a dress scarcely handsomer than that of a common herdsman, but distinguished by the beauty and size of his long silvery beard. His name was Nicholas Bonstetten. Melchior Sturmthal, banner-bearer of Berne, a man of middle age, and a soldier of distinguished courage, with Adam Zimmer-

man, a burgess of Soleure, who was considerably older, completed the number of the envoys.

Each was dressed after his best fashion; but, notwithstanding that the severe eye of Arnold Biederman censured one or two silver belt-buckles, as well as a chain of the same metal, which decorated the portly person of the burgess of Soleure, it seemed that a powerful and victorious people, for such the Swiss were now to be esteemed, were never represented by an embassy of such patriarchal simplicity. The deputies traveled on foot, with their piked staves in their hands, like pilgrims bound for some place of devotion. Two mules, which bore their little stock of baggage, were led by young lads, sons or cousins of members of the embassy, who had obtained permission in this manner to get such a glance of the world beyond the mountains as this journey promised to afford.

But although their retinue was small, so far as respected either state or personal attendance and accommodation, the dangerous circumstances of the times, and the very unsettled state of the country beyond their own territories, did not permit men charged with affairs of such importance to travel without a guard. Even the danger arising from the wolves, which, when pinched by the approach of winter, have been known to descend from their mountain fastnesses into open villages, such as those the travelers might choose to quarter in, rendered the presence of some escort necessary: and the bands of deserters from various services, who formed parties of banditti on the frontiers of Alsatia and Germany, combined to recommend such a precaution.

Accordingly, about twenty of the selected youth from the various Swiss cantons, including Rudiger, Ernest, and Sigismond, Arnold's three eldest sons, attended upon the deputation; they did not, however, observe any military order, or march close or near to the patriarchal train. On the contrary, they formed hunting-parties of five or six together, who explored the rocks, woods, and passes of the mountains through which the envoys journeyed. Their slower pace allowed the active young men, who were accompanied by their large shaggy dogs, full time to destroy wolves and bears, or occasionally to surprise a chamois among the cliffs; while the hunters, even while in pursuit of their sport, were careful to examine such places as might afford opportunity for ambush, and thus ascertained the safety of the party whom they escorted more securely than if they had attended close on their train. A peculiar note on the huge Swiss

bugle, before described, formed of the horn of the mountain bull, was the signal agreed upon for collecting in a body should danger occur. Rudolph Donnerhugel, so much younger than his brethren in the same important commission, took the command of this mountain body-guard, whom he usually accompanied in their sportive excursions. In point of arms, they were well provided, bearing two-handed swords, long partizans and spears, as well as both cross and long bows, short cutlasses, and huntsmen's knives. The heavier weapons, as impeding their activity, were carried with the baggage, but were ready to be assumed on the slightest alarm.

Arthur Philipson, like his late antagonist, naturally preferred the company and sports of the younger men to the grave conversation and slow pace of the fathers of the mountain commonwealth. There was, however, one temptation to loiter with the baggage, which, had other circumstances permitted, might have reconciled the young Englishman to forego the opportunities of sport which the Swiss youth so eagerly sought after, and endure the slow pace and grave conversation of the elders of the party. In a word, Anne of Geierstein, accompanied by a Swiss girl, her attendant, traveled in the rear of the deputation.

The two females were mounted upon asses, whose slow step hardly kept pace with the baggage mules; and it may be fairly suspected that Arthur Philipson, in requital of the important services which he had received from that beautiful and interesting young woman, would have deemed it no extreme hardship to have afforded her occasionally his assistance on the journey, and the advantage of his conversation to relieve the tediousness of the way. But he dared not presume to offer attentions which the customs of the country did not seem to permit, since they were not attempted by any of the maiden's cousins, or even by Rudolph Donnerhugel, who certainly had hitherto appeared to neglect no opportunity to recommend himself to his fair cousin. Besides, Arthur had reflection enough to be convinced that, in yielding to the feelings which impelled him to cultivate the acquaintance of this amiable young person, he would certainly incur the serious displeasure of his father, and probably also that of her uncle, by whose hospitality they had profited, and whose safe-conduct they were in the act of enjoying.

The young Englishman, therefore, pursued the same amusements which interested the other young men of the party, managing only, as frequently as their halts permitted,

to venture upon offering to the maiden such marks of courtesy as could afford no room for remark or censure. And his character as a sportsman being now well established, he sometimes permitted himself, even when the game was afoot, to loiter in the vicinity of the path on which he could at least mark the flutter of the gray wimple of Anne of Geierstein, and the outline of the form which it shrouded. This indolence, as it seemed, was not unfavorably construed by his companions, being only accounted an indifference to the less noble or less dangerous game ; for when the object was a bear, wolf, or other animal of prey, no spear, cutlass, or bow of the party, not even those of Rudolph Donnerhugel, were so prompt in the chase as those of the young Englishman.

Meantime, the elder Philipson had other and more serious subjects of consideration. He was a man, as the reader must have already seen, of much acquaintance with the world, in which he had acted parts different from that which he now sustained. Former feelings were recalled and awakened by the view of sports familiar to his early years. The clamor of the hounds, echoing from the wild hills and dark forests through which they traveled ; the sight of the gallant young huntsmen, appearing, as they brought the object of their chase to bay, amid airy cliffs and profound precipices, which seemed impervious to the human foot ; the sounds of halloo and horn reverberating from hill to hill, had more than once wellnigh impelled him to take a share in the hazardous but animating amusement, which, next to war, was then in most parts of Europe the most serious occupation of life. But the feeling was transient, and he became yet more deeply interested in studying the manners and opinions of the persons with whom he was traveling.

They seemed to be all colored with the same downright and blunt simplicity which characterized Arnold Biederman, although it was in none of them elevated by the same dignity of thought and profound sagacity. In speaking of the political state of their country, they affected no secrecy ; and although, with the exception of Rudolph, their own young men were not admitted into their councils, the exclusion seemed only adopted with a view to the necessary subordination of youth to age, and not for the purpose of observing any mystery. In the presence of the elder Philipson, they freely discussed the pretensions of the Duke of Burgundy, the means which their country possessed of maintaining her independence, and the firm resolution of the Helvetian

League to bid defiance to the utmost force the world could bring against it, rather than submit to the slightest insult. In other respects, their views appeared wise and moderate, although both the banneret of Berne and the consequential Burgher of Soleure seemed to hold the consequences of war more lightly than they were viewed by the cautious Landamman of Underwalden and his venerable companion, Nicholas Bonstetten, who subscribed to all his opinions.

It frequently happened that, quitting these subjects, the conversation turned on such as were less attractive to their fellow-traveler. The signs of the weather, the comparative fertility of recent seasons, the most advantageous mode of managing their orchards and rearing their crops, though interesting to the mountaineers themselves, gave Philipson slender amusement; and notwithstanding that the excellent Meinherr Zimmerman of Soleure would fain have joined with him in conversation respecting trade and merchandise, yet the Englishman, who dealt in articles of small bulk and considerable value, and traversed sea and land to carry on his traffic, could find few mutual topics to discuss with the Swiss trader, whose commerce only extended into the neighboring districts of Burgundy and Germany, and whose goods consisted of coarse woolen cloths, fustian, hides, peltry, and such ordinary articles.

But, ever and anon, while the Switzers were discussing some paltry interests of trade, or describing some process of rude cultivation, or speaking of blights in grain, and the murrain amongst cattle, with all the dull minuteness of petty farmers and traders met at a country fair, a well-known spot would recall the name and story of a battle in which some of them had served (for there were none of the party who had not been repeatedly in arms), and the military details, which in other countries were only the theme of knights and squires who had acted their part in them, or of learned clerks who labored to record them, were, in this singular region, the familiar and intimate subjects of discussion with men whose peaceful occupations seemed to place them at an immeasurable distance from the profession of a soldier. This led the Englishman to think of the ancient inhabitants of Rome, where the plow was so readily exchanged for the sword, and the cultivation of a rude farm for the management of public affairs. He hinted this resemblance to the Landamman, who was naturally gratified with the compliment to his country, but presently replied—"May Heaven continue among us the home-bred virtues of the Romans, and

preserve us from their lust of conquest and love of foreign luxuries!"

The slow pace of the travelers, with various causes of delay which it is unnecessary to dwell upon, occasioned the deputation spending two nights on the road before they reached Bâle. The small towns or villages in which they quartered received them with such marks of respectful hospitality as they had the means to bestow, and their arrival was a signal for a little feast, with which the heads of the community uniformly regaled them.

On such occasions, while the elders of the village entertained the deputies of the Confederation, the young men of the escort were provided for by those of their own age, several of whom, usually aware of their approach, were accustomed to join in the chase of the day, and made the strangers acquainted with the spots where game was most plenty.

These feasts were never prolonged to excess, and the most special dainties which composed them were kids, lambs, and game, the produce of the mountains. Yet it seemed both to Arthur Philipson and his father that the advantages of good cheer were more prized by the banneret of Berne and the burgess of Soleure than by their host the Landamman and the deputy of Schwytz. There was no excess committed, as we have already said; but the deputies first mentioned obviously understood the art of selecting the choicest morsels, and were connoisseurs in the good wine, chiefly of foreign growth, with which they freely washed it down. Arnold was too wise to censure what he had no means of amending: he contented himself by observing in his own person a rigorous diet, living indeed almost entirely upon vegetables and fair water, in which he was closely imitated by the old gray-bearded Nicholas Bonstetten, who seemed to make it his principal object to follow the Landamman's example in everything.

It was, as we have already said, the third day after the commencement of their journey before the Swiss deputation reached the vicinity of Bâle, in which city, then one of the largest in the southwestern extremity of Germany, they proposed taking up their abode for the evening, nothing doubting a friendly reception. The town, it is true, was not then, nor till about thirty years afterwards, a part of the Swiss Confederation, to which it was only joined in 1501; but it was a Free Imperial City, connected with Berne, Soleure, Lucerne, and other towns of Switzerland, by mutual interests and constant intercourse. It was the object of the

deputation to negotiate, if possible, a peace, which could not be more useful to themselves than to the city of Bâle, considering the interruptions of commerce which must be occasioned by a rupture between the Duke of Burgundy and the cantons, and the great advantage which that city would derive by preserving a neutrality, situated as it was betwixt these two hostile powers.

They anticipated, therefore, as welcome a reception from the authorities of Bâle as they had received while in the bounds of their own Confederation, since the interests of that city were so deeply concerned in the objects of their mission. The next chapter will show how far these expectations were realized.

CHAPTER VIII

They saw that city, welcoming the Rhine,
As from his mountain heritage he bursts,
As purposed proud Orgetorix of yore,
Leaving the desert region of the hills,
To lord it o'er the fertile plains of Gaul.

Helvetia.

THE eyes of the English travelers, wearied with a succession of wild mountainous scenery, now gazed with pleasure upon a country still indeed irregular and hilly in its surface, but capable of high cultivation, and adorned with cornfields and vineyards. The Rhine, a broad and large river, poured its gray stream in a huge sweep through the landscape, and divided into two portions the city of Bâle, which is situated on its banks. The southern part, to which the path of the Swiss deputies conducted them, displayed the celebrated cathedral, and the lofty terrace which runs in front of it, and seemed to remind the travelers that they now approached a country in which the operations of man could make themselves distinguished even among the works of nature, instead of being lost, as the fate of the most splendid efforts of human labor must have been, among those tremendous mountains which they had so lately traversed.

They were yet a mile from the entrance of the city, when the party was met by one of the magistrates, attended by two or three citizens mounted on mules, the velvet housings of which expressed wealth and quality. They greeted the Landamman of Unterwalden and his party in a respectful manner, and the latter prepared themselves to hear and make a suitable reply to the hospitable invitation which they naturally expected to receive.

The message of the community of Bâle was, however, diametrically opposite to what they had anticipated. It was delivered with a good deal of diffidence and hesitation by the functionary who met them, and who certainly, while discharging his commission, did not appear to consider it as the most respectable which he might have borne. There were many professions of the most profound and fraternel regard for the cities of the Helvetian League, with whom

the orator of Bâle declared his own state to be united in friendship and interest. But he ended by intimating that, on account of certain cogent and weighty reasons, which should be satisfactorily explained at more leisure, the Free City of Bâle could not, this evening, receive within its walls the highly respected deputies who where traveling, at the command of the Helvetian Diet, to the court of the Duke of Burgundy.

Philipson marked with much interest the effect which this most unexpected intimation produced on the members of the embassage. Rudolph Donnerhugel, who had joined their company as they approached Bâle, appeared less surprised than his associates, and, while he remained perfectly silent, seemed rather anxious to penetrate their sentiments than disposed to express his own. It was not the first time the sagacious merchant had observed that this bold and fiery young man could, when his purposes required it, place a strong constraint upon the natural impetuosity of his temper. For the others, the banneret's brow darkened, the face of the burgess of Soleure became flushed like the moon when rising in the northwest, the gray-bearded deputy of Schwytz looked anxiously on Arnold Biederman, and the Landamman himself seemed more moved than was usual in a person of his equanimity. At length he replied to the functionary of Bâle, in a voice somewhat altered by his feelings—

"This is a singular message to the deputies of the Swiss Confederacy, bound as we are upon an amicable mission, on which depends the interest of the good citizens of Bâle, whom we have always treated as our good friends, and who still profess to be so. The shelter of their roofs, the protection of their walls, the wonted intercourse of hospitality, is what no friendly state had a right to refuse to the inhabitants of another."

"Nor is it with their will that the community of Bâle refuse it, worthy Landamman," replied the magistrate. "Not you alone and your worthy associates, but your escort, and your very beasts of burden, should be entertained with all the kindness which the citizens of Bâle could bestow. But we act under constraint."

"And by whom exercised?" said the banneret, bursting out into passion. "Has the Emperor Sigismund profited so little by the example of his predecessors——"

"The Emperor," replied the delegate of Bâle, interrupting the banneret, "is a well-intentioned and peaceful mon-

arch, as he has been ever; but—there are Burgundian troops of late marched into the Sundgau, and messages have been sent to our state from Count Archibald of Hagenbach."

"Enough said," replied the Landamman. "Draw not farther the veil from a weakness for which you blush. I comprehend you entirely. Bâle lies too near the citadel of La Farette to permit its citizens to consult their own inclinations. Brother, we see where your difficulty lies; we pity you—and we forgive your inhospitality."

"Nay, but hear me to an end, worthy Landamman," answered the magistrate. "There is here in the vicinity an old hunting-seat of the Counts of Falkenstein, called Graffslust, which, though ruinous, yet may afford better lodgings than the open air, and is capable of some defense—though Heaven forbid that any one should dare to intrude upon your repose! And harkye hither, my worthy friends; if you find in the old place some refreshments, as wine, beer, and the like, use them without scruple, for they are there for your accommodation."

"I do not refuse to occupy a place of security," said the Landamman; "for although the causing us to be excluded from Bâle may be only done in the spirit of petty insolence and malice, yet it may also, for what we can tell, be connected with some purpose of violence. Your provisions we thank you for; but we will not, with my consent, feed at the cost of friends who are ashamed to own us unless by stealth."

"One thing more, my worthy sir," said the official of Bâle. "You have a maiden in company, who, I presume to think, is your daughter. There is but rough accommodation where you are going, even for men; for women there is little better, though what we could we have done to arrange matters as well as may be. But rather let your daughter go with us back to Bâle, where my dame will be a mother to her till next morning, when I will bring her to your camp in safety. We promised to shut our gates against the men of the Confederacy, but the women were not mentioned."

"You are subtle casuist, you men of Bâle," answered the Landamman; "but know that, from the time in which the Helvetians sallied forth to encounter Cæsar down to the present hour, the women of Switzerland, in the press of danger, have had their abode in the camp of their fathers, brothers, and husbands, and sought no farther safety than they might find in the courage of their relations. We

have enough of men to protect our women, and my niece shall remain with us and take the fate which Heaven may send us."

"Adieu, then, worthy friend," said the magistrate of Bâle; "it grieves me to part with you thus, but evil fate will have it so. Yonder grassy avenue will conduct you to the old hunting-seat, where Heaven send that you may pass a quiet night; for, apart from other risks, men say that these ruins have no good name. Will you yet permit your niece, since such the young person is, to pass to Bâle for the night in my company?"

"If we are disturbed by beings like ourselves," said Arnold Biederman, "we have strong arms and heavy partizans; if we be visited, as your words would imply, by those of a different description, we have, or should have, good consciences, and confidence in Heaven. Good friends, my brethren on this embassy, have I spoken your sentiments as well as mine own?"

The other deputies intimated their assent to what their companion had said, and the citizens of Bâle took a courteous farewell of their guests, endeavoring, by the excess of civility, to atone for their deficiency in effective hospitality. After their departure, Rudolph was the first to express his sense of their pusillanimous behavior, on which he had been silent during their presence. "Coward dogs!" he said, "may the Butcher of Burgundy flay the very skins from them with his exactions, to teach them to disown old friendships, rather than abide the lightest blast of a tyrant's anger!"

"And not even their own tyrant either," said another of the group; for several of the young men had gathered round their seniors, to hear the welcome which they expected from the magistrates of Bâle.

"No," replied Ernest, one of Arnold Biederman's sons, "they do not pretend that their own prince the Emperor hath interfered with them; but a word of the Duke of Burgundy, which should be no more to them than a breath of wind from the west, is sufficient to stir them to such brutal inhospitality. It were well to march to the city and compel them at the sword's point to give us shelter."

"A murmur of applause arose amongst the youth around which awakened the displeasure of Arnold Biederman.

"Did I hear," he said, "the tongue of a son of mine, or was it that of a brutish lanzknecht, who has no pleasure but in battle or violence? Where is the modesty of the youth

of Switzerland, who were wont to wait the signal for action till it pleased the elders of the canton to give it, and were as gentle as maidens till the voice of their patriarchs bade them be bold as lions ?"

"I meant no harm, father," said Ernest, abashed with this rebuke, "far less any slight towards you ; but I must needs say——"

"Say not a word, my son," replied Arnold, "but leave our camp to-morrow by break of day ; and, as thou takest thy way back to Geierstein, to which I command thine instant return, remember, that he is not fit to visit strange countries who cannot rule his tongue before his own countrymen, and to his own father."

The banneret of Berne, the burgess of Soleure, even the long-bearded deputy from Schwytz, endeavored to intercede for the offender and obtain a remission of his banishment ; but it was in vain.

"No, my good friends and brethren—no," replied Arnold. "These young men require an example ; and though I am grieved in one sense that the offense has chanced within my own family, yet I am pleased in another light that the delinquent should be one over whom I can exercise full authority, without suspicion of partiality. Ernest, my son, thou hast heard my commands. Return to Geierstein with the morning's light, and let me find thee an altered man when I return thither."

The young Swiss, who was evidently much hurt and shocked at this public affront, placed one knee on the ground and kissed his father's right hand, while Arnold, without the slightest sign of anger, bestowed his blessing upon him ; and Ernest, without a word of remonstrance, fell into the rear of the party. The deputation then proceeded down the avenue which had been pointed out to them, and at the bottom of which arose the massy ruins of Graffslust ; but there was not enough of daylight remaining to discern their exact form. They could observe as they drew nearer, and as the night became darker, that three or four windows were lighted np, while the rest of the front remained obscured in gloom. When they arrived at the place, they perceived it was surrounded by a large and deep moat, the sullen surface of which reflected, though faintly, the glimmer of the lights within.

CHAPTER IX

Francisco. Give you good-night.
Marcellus. O, farewell, honest soldier.
Who hath relieved you?
Francisco. Give you good-night; Bernardo hath my place.
Hamlet.

THE first occupation of our travelers was to find the means of crossing the moat, and they were not long of discovering the *tête-du-pont* on which the drawbridge, when lowered, had formerly rested. The bridge itself had been long decayed, but a temporary passage of fir-trees and planks had been constructed, apparently very lately, which admitted them to the chief entrance of the castle. On entering it, they found a wicket opening under the archway, which, glimmering with light, served to guide them to a hall prepared evidently for their accommodation as well as circumstances had admitted of.

A large fire of well-seasoned wood burned blythely in the chimney, and had been maintained so long there, that the air of the hall, notwithstanding its great size and somewhat ruinous aspect, felt mild and genial. There was also at the end of the apartment a stack of wood, large enough to maintain the fire had they been to remain there a week. Two or three long tables in the hall stood covered and ready for their reception; and, on looking more closely, several large hampers were found in a corner, containing cold provisions of every kind, prepared with great care for their immediate use. The eyes of the good burgess of Soleure twinkled when he beheld the young men in the act of transferring the supper from the hampers and arranging it on the table.

"Well," said he, "these poor men of Bâle have saved their character; since, if they have fallen short in welcome, they have abounded in good cheer."

"Ah, friend!" said Arnold Biederman, "the absence of the landlord is a great deduction from the entertainment. Better half an apple from the hand of your host than a bridal feast without his company."

"We owe them the less for their banquet," said the banneret. "But, from the doubtful language they held, I

should judge it meet to keep a strong guard to-night, and even that some of our young men should, from time to time, patrol around the old ruins. The place is strong and defensible, and so far our thanks are due to those who have acted as our quartermasters. We will, however, with your permission, my honored brethren, examine the house within, and then arrange regular guards and patrols. To your duty then, young men, and search these ruins carefully; they may perchance contain more than ourselves; for we are now near one who, like a pilfering fox, moves more willingly by night than by day, and seeks his prey amidst ruins and wildernesses rather than in the open field."

All agreed to this proposal. The young men took torches, of which a good provision had been left for their use, and made a strict search through the ruins.

The greater part of the castle was much more wasted and ruinous than the portion which the citizens of Bâle seemed to have destined for the accommodation of the embassy. Some parts were roofless, and the whole desolate. The glare of light, the gleam of arms, the sound of the human voice, and echoes of mortal tread startled from their dark recesses bats, owls, and other birds of ill omen, the usual inhabitants of such time-worn edifices, whose flight through the desolate chambers repeatedly occasioned alarm among those who heard the noise without seeing the cause, and shouts of laughter when it became known. They discovered that the deep moat surrounded their place of retreat on all sides, and, of course, that they were in safety against any attack which could be made from without, except it was attempted by the main entrance, which it was easy to barricade and guard with sentinels. They also ascertained by strict search that, though it was possible an individual might be concealed amid such a waste of ruins, yet it was altogether impossible that any number which might be formidable to so large a party as their own could have remained there without a certainty of discovery. These particulars were reported to the banneret, who directed Donnerhugel to take charge of a body of six of the young men, such as he should himself choose, to patrol on the outside of the building till the first cock-crowing, and at that hour to return to the castle, when the same number were to take the duty till morning dawned, and then be relieved in their turn. Rudolph declared his own intention to remain on guard the whole night; and as he was equally remarkable for vigilance as for strength and courage, the external watch was considered as safely provided for, it being

settled that, in case of any sudden rencounter, the deep and hoarse sound of the Swiss bugle should be the signal for sending support to the patroling party.

Within side the castle, the precautions were taken with equal vigilance. A sentinel, to be relieved every two hours, was appointed to take post at the principal gate, and other two kept watch on the other side of the castle, although the moat appeared to ensure safety in that quarter.

These precautions being taken, the remainder of the party sat down to refresh themselves, the deputies occupying the upper part of the hall, while those of their escort modestly arranged themselves in the lower end of the same large apartment. Quantities of hay and straw, which were left piled in the wide castle, were put to the purpose for which undoubtedly they had been destined by the citizens of Bâle, and, with aid of cloaks and mantles, were judged excellent good bedding by a hardy race who, in war or the chase, were often well satisfied with a much worse night's lair.

The attention of the Bâlese had even gone so far as to provide for Anne of Geierstein separate accommodation, more suitable to her use than that assigned to the men of the party. An apartment, which had probably been the buttery of the castle, entered from the hall, and had also a doorway leading out into a passage connected with the ruins; but this last had hastily yet carefully, been built up with large hewn stones taken from the ruins; without mortar, indeed, or any other cement, but so well secured by their own weight, that an attempt to displace them must have alarmed not only any one who might be in the apartment itself, but also those who were in the hall adjacent, or indeed in any part of the castle. In the small room thus carefully arranged and secured there were two pallet-beds and a large fire, which blazed on the hearth, and gave warmth and comfort to the apartment. Even the means of devotion were not forgotten, a small crucifix of bronze being hung over a table, on which lay a breviary.

Those who first discovered this little place of retreat came back loud in praise of the delicacy of the citizens of Bâle, who, while preparing for the general accommodation of the strangers, had not failed to provide separately and peculiarly for that of their female companion.

Arnold Biederman felt the kindness of this conduct. "We should pity our friends of Bâle, and not nourish resentment against them," he said. "They have stretched

their kindness towards us as far as their personal apprehensions permitted; and that is saying no small matter for them, my masters, for no passion is so unutterably selfish as that of fear. Anne, my love, thou art fatigued. Go to the retreat provided for you, and Lizette shall bring you from this abundant mass of provisions what will be fittest for your evening meal."

So saying, he led his niece into the little bedroom, and, looking round with an air of complacency, wished her good repose; but there was something on the maiden's brow which seemed to augur that her uncle's wishes would not be fulfilled. From the moment she had left Switzerland, her looks had become clouded, her intercourse with those who approached her had grown more brief and rare, her whole appearance was marked with secret anxiety or secret sorrow. This did not escape her uncle, who naturally imputed it to the pain of parting from him, which was probably soon to take place, and to her regret at leaving the tranquil spot in which so many years of her youth had been spent.

But Anne of Geierstein had no sooner entered the apartment than her whole frame trembled violently, and the color leaving her cheeks entirely, she sunk down on one of the pallets, where, resting her elbows on her knees, and pressing her hands on her forehead, she rather resembled a person borne down by mental distress, or oppressed by some severe illness, than one who, tired with a journey, was in haste to betake herself to needful rest. Arnold was not quick-sighted as to the many sources of female passion. He saw that his niece suffered; but imputing it only to the causes already mentioned, augmented by the hysterical effects often produced by fatigue, he gently blamed her for having departed from her character of a Swiss maiden ere she was yet out of reach of a Swiss breeze of wind.

"Thou must not let the dames of Germany or Flanders think that our daughters have degenerated from their mothers; else must we fight the battles of Sempach and Laupen over again, to convince the Emperor, and this haughty Duke of Burgundy, that our men are of the same mettle with their forefathers. And as for our parting, I do not fear it. My brother is a count of the Empire, indeed, and therefore he must needs satisfy himself that everything over which he possesses any title shall be at his command, and sends for thee to prove his right of doing so. But I know him well. He will no sooner be satisfied that he may command thy attendance at pleasure than he will concern

himself about thee no more. Thee! Alas! poor thing, in what couldst thou aid his courtly intrigues and ambitious plans? No—no, thou art not for the noble count's purpose, and must be content to trudge back to rule the dairy at Geierstein, and be the darling of thine old peasantlike uncle."

"Would to God we were there even now!" said the maiden, in a tone of wretchedness which she strove in vain to conceal or suppress.

"That may hardly be till we have executed the purpose which brought us hither," said the literal Landamman. "But lay thee on thy pallet, Anne; take a morsel of food and three drops of wine, and thou wilt wake to-morrow as gay as on a Swiss holiday, when the pipe sounds the reveille."

Anne was now able to plead a severe headache, and declining all refreshment, which she declared herself incapable of tasting, she bade her uncle good night. She then desired Lizette to get some food for herself, cautioning her, as she returned, to make as little noise as possible, and not to break her repose if she should have the good fortune to fall asleep. Arnold Biederman then kissed his niece, and returned to the hall, where his colleagues in office were impatient to commence an attack on the provisions which were in readiness; to which the escort of young men, diminished by the patrols and sentinels, were no less disposed than their seniors.

The signal of assault was given by the deputy from Schwytz, the eldest of the party, pronouncing in patriarchal form a benediction over the meal. The travelers then commenced their operations with a vivacity which showed that the uncertainty whether they should get any food, and the delays which had occurred in arranging themselves in their quarters, had infinitely increased their appetites. Even the Landamman, whose moderation sometimes approached to abstinence, seemed that night in a more genial humor than ordinary. His friend of Schwytz, after his example, ate, drank, and spoke more than usual, while the rest of the deputies pushed their meal to the verge of a carousal. The elder Philipson marked the scene with an attentive and anxious eye, confining his applications to the wine-cup to such pledges as the politeness of the times called upon him to reply to. His son had left the hall just as the banquet began, in the manner which we are now to relate.

Arthur had proposed to himself to join the youths who were to perform the duty of sentinels within, or patrols on the outside of their place of repose, and had indeed made

some arrangement for that purpose with Sigismund, the third of the Landamman's sons. But while about to steal a parting glance at Anne of Geierstein, before offering his service as he proposed, there appeared on her brow such a deep and solemn expression as diverted his thoughts from every other subject excepting the anxious doubts as to what could possibly have given rise to such a change. The placid openness of brow, the eye which expressed conscious and fearless innocence, the lips which, seconded by a look as frank as her words, seemed ever ready to speak, in kindness and in confidence, that which the heart dictated, were for the moment entirely changed in character and expression, and in a degree and manner for which no ordinary cause could satisfactorily account. Fatigue might have banished the rose from the maiden's beautiful complexion, and sickness or pain might have dimmed her eye and clouded her brow; but the look of deep dejection with which she fixed her eyes at times on the ground, and the startled and terrified glance which she cast around her at other intervals, must have had their rise in some different source. Neither could illness or weariness explain the manner in which her lips were contracted or compressed together, like one who makes up her mind to act or behold something that is fearful, or account for the tremor which seemed at times to steal over her insensibly, though by a strong effort she was able at intervals to throw it off. For this change of expression there must be in the heart some deeply melancholy and afflicting cause. What could that cause be?

It is dangerous for youth to behold beauty in the pomp of all her charms, with every look bent upon conquest; more dangerous to see her in the hour of unaffected and unapprehensive ease and simplicity, yielding herself to the graceful whim of the moment, and as willing to be pleased as desirous of pleasing. There are minds which may be still more affected by gazing on beauty in sorrow, and feeling that pity, that desire of comforting the lovely mourner, which the poet has described as so nearly akin to love. But to a spirit of that romantic and adventurous cast which the Middle Ages frequently produced, the sight of a young and amiable person evidently in a state of terror and suffering, which had no visible cause, was perhaps still more impressive than beauty in her pride, her tenderness, or her sorrow. Such sentiments, it must be remembered, were not confined to the highest ranks only, but might then be found in all classes of society which were raised above the mere peasant or artisan. Young

Philipson gazed on Anne of Geierstein with such intense curiosity, mingled with pity and tenderness, that the bustling scene around him seemed to vanish from his eyes, and leave no one in the noisy hall save himself and the object of his interest.

What could it be that so evidently oppressed and almost quailed a spirit so well balanced, and a courage so well tempered, when, being guarded by the swords of the bravest men perhaps to be found in Europe, and lodged in a place of strength, even the most timid of her sex might have found confidence? Surely, if an attack were to be made upon them, the clamor of a conflict in such circumstances could scarce be more terrific than the roar of those cataracts which he had seen her despise? "At least," he thought, "she ought to be aware that there is ONE who is bound by friendship and gratitude to fight to the death in her defense. Would to Heaven," he continued in the same reverie, "it were possible to convey to her, without sign or speech, the assurance of my unalterable resolution to protect her in the worst of perils!" As such thoughts streamed through his mind, Anne raised her eyes in one of those fits of deep feeling which seemed to overwhelm her; and while she cast them round the hall with a look of apprehension, as if she expected to see amid the well-known companions of her journey some strange and unwelcome apparition, they encountered the fixed and anxious gaze of young Philipson. They were instantly bent on the ground, while a deep blush showed how much she was conscious of having attracted his attention by her previous deportment.

Arthur, on his part, with equal consciousness, blushed as deeply as the maiden herself, and drew himself back from her observation. But when Anne rose up, and was escorted by her uncle to her bedchamber, in the manner we have already mentioned, it seemed to Philipson as if she had carried with her from the apartment the lights with which it was illuminated, and left it in the twilight melancholy of some funeral hall. His deep musings were pursuing the subject which occupied them thus anxiously, when the manly voice of Donnerhugel spoke close in his ear—

"What, comrade, has our journey to-day fatigued you so much that you go to sleep upon your feet?"

"Now, Heaven forbid, hauptman," said the Englishman, starting from his reverie, and addressing Rudolph by this name (signifying captain, or literally head-man), which the youth of the expedition had by unanimous consent bestowed

on him—"Heaven forbid I should sleep, if there be aught like action in the wind."

"Where dost thou propose to be at cock-crow?" said the Swiss.

"Where duty shall call me, or your experience, noble hauptman, shall appoint," replied Arthur. "But, with your leave, I purposed to take Sigismund's guard on the bridge till midnight or morning dawn. He still feels the sprain which he received in his spring after yonder chamois, and I persuaded him to take some uninterrupted rest, as the best mode of restoring his strength."

"He will do well to keep his counsel, then," again whispered Donnerhugel: "the old Landamman is not a man to make allowances for mishaps, when they interfere with duty. Those who are under his orders should have as few brains as a bull, as strong limbs as a bear, and be as impassible as lead or iron to all the casualties of life and all the weaknesses of humanity."

Arthur replied in the same tone—"I have been the Landamman's guest for some time, and have seen no specimens of any such rigid discipline."

"You are a stranger," said the Swiss, "and the old man has too much hospitality to lay you under the least restraint. You are a volunteer, too, in whatever share you choose to take in our sports or our military duty; and therefore, when I ask you to walk abroad with me at the first cock-crowing, it is only in the event that such exercise shall entirely consist with your own pleasure."

"I consider myself as under your command for the time," said Philipson; "but, not to bandy courtesy, at cock-crow I shall be relieved from my watch on the drawbridge, and will be by that time glad to exchange the post for a more extended walk."

"Do you not choose more of this fatiguing, and probably unnecessary, duty than may befit your strength?" said Rudolph.

"I take no more than you do," said Arthur, "as you propose not to take rest till morning."

"True," answered Donnerhugel, "but I am a Swiss."

"And I," answered Philipson, quickly, "am an Englishman."

"I did not mean what I said in the sense you take it," said Rudolph, laughing: "I only meant, that I am more interested in this matter than you can be, who are a stranger to the cause in which we are personally engaged."

"I am a stranger, no doubt," replied Arthur; "but a stranger who has enjoyed your hospitality, and who, therefore, claims a right, while with you, to a share in your labors and dangers."

"Be it so," said Rudolph Donnerhugel. "I shall have finished my first rounds at the hour when the sentinels at the castle are relieved, and shall be ready to recommence them in your good company."

"Content," said the Englishman. "And now I will to my post, for I suspect Sigismund is blaming me already, as oblivious of my promise."

They hastened together to the gate, where Sigismund willingly yielded up his weapon and his guard to young Philipson, confirming the idea sometimes entertained of him, that he was the most indolent and least spirited of the family of Geierstein.

Rudolph could not suppress his displeasure. "What would the Landamman say," he demanded, "if he saw thee thus quietly yield up post and partisan to a stranger?"

"He would say I did well," answered the young man, nothing daunted; "for he is forever reminding us to let the stranger have his own way in everything; and English Arthur stands on this bridge by his own wish, and no asking of mine. Therefore, kind Arthur, since thou wilt barter warm straw and a sound sleep for frosty air and a clear moonlight, I make thee welcome with all my heart. Hear your duty. You are to stop all who enter, or attempt to enter, or till they give the password. If they are strangers, you must give alarm. But you will suffer such of our friends as are known to you to pass outwards without challenge or alarm, because the deputation may find occasion to send messengers abroad."

"A murrain on thee, thou lazy losel!" said Rudolph. "Thou art the only sluggard of thy kin."

"Then am I the only wise man of them all," said the youth. "Harkye, brave hauptman, ye have supped this evening, have ye not?"

"It is a point of wisdom, ye owl," answered the Bernese, "not to go into the forest fasting."

"If it is wisdom to eat when we are hungry," answered Sigismund, "there can be no folly in sleeping when we are weary." So saying, and after a desperate yawn or two, the relieved sentinel halted off, giving full effect to the sprain of which he complained.

"Yet there is strength in those loitering limbs, and valor

in that indolent and sluggish spirit," said Rudolph to the Englishman. "But it is time that I, who censure others, should betake me to my own task. Hither, comrades of the watch—hither."

The Bernese accompanied these words with a whistle, which brought from within six young men, whom he had previously chosen for the duty, and who, after a hurried supper, now waited his summons. One or two of them had large bloodhounds or lyme-dogs, which, though usually employed in the pursuit of animals of chase, were also excellent for discovering ambuscades, in which duty their services were now to be employed. One of these animals was held in a leash by the person who, forming the advance of the party, went about twenty yards in front of them; a second was the property of Donnerhugel himself, who had the creature singularly under command. Three of his companions attended him closely, and the two others followed, one of whom bore a horn of the Bernese wild bull, by way of bugle. This little party crossed the moat by the temporary bridge, and moved on to the verge of the forest, which lay adjacent to the castle, and the skirts of which were most likely to conceal any ambuscade that could be apprehended. The moon was now up, and near the full, so that Arthur, from the elevation on which the castle stood, could trace their slow, cautious march, amid the broad silver light, until they were lost in the depths of the forest.

When this object had ceased to occupy his eyes, the thoughts of his lonely watch again returned to Anne of Geierstein, and to the singular expression of distress and apprehension which had that evening clouded her beautiful features. Then the blush which had chased, for the moment, paleness and terror from her countenance, at the instant his eyes encountered hers—was it anger—was it modesty—was it some softer feeling, more gentle than the one, more tender than the other? Young Philipson, who, like Chaucer's Squire, was "as modest as a maid," almost trembled to give to that look the favorable interpretation which a more self-satisfied gallant would have applied to it without scruple. No hue of rising or setting day was ever so lovely in the eyes of the young man as that blush was in his recollection; nor did ever enthusiastic visionary or poetical dreamer find out so many fanciful forms in the clouds as Arthur divined various interpretations from the indications of interest which had passed over the beautiful countenance of the Swiss maiden.

In the meantime, the thought suddenly burst on his reverie, that it could little concern him what was the cause of the perturbation she had exhibited. They had met at no distant period for the first time; they must soon part forever. She could be nothing more to him than the remembrance of a beautiful vision, and he could have no other part in her memory save as a stranger from a foreign land, who had been a sojourner for a season in her uncle's house, but whom she could never expect to see again. When this idea intruded on the train of romantic visions which agitated him, it was like the sharp stroke of the harpoon, which awakens the whale from slumbering torpidity into violent action. The gateway in which the young soldier kept his watch seemed suddenly too narrow for him. He rushed across the temporary bridge, and hastily traversed a short space of ground in front of the *tête-du-pont*, or defensive work, on which its outer extremity rested.

Here for a time he paced the narrow extent to which he was confined by his duty as a sentinel, with long and rapid strides, as if he had been engaged by vow to take the greatest possible quantity of exercise upon that limited space of ground. His exertion, however, produced the effect of in some degree composing his mind, recalling him to himself, and reminding him of the numerous reasons which prohibited his fixing his attention, much more his affections, upon this young person, however fascinating she was.

"I have surely," he thought, as he slackened his pace and shouldered his heavy partizan, "sense enough left to recollect my condition and my duties—to think of my father, to whom I am all in all, and to think also on the dishonor which must accrue to me, were I capable of winning the affections of a frank-hearted and confiding girl, to whom I could never do justice by dedicating my life to return them. No," he said to himself, "she will soon forget me, and I will study to remember her no otherwise than I would a pleasing dream, which hath for a moment crossed a night of perils and dangers, such as my life seems doomed to be."

As he spoke, he stopped short in his walk, and as he rested on his weapon, a tear rose unbidden to his eye and stole down his cheek without being wiped away. But he combated this gentler mood of passion as he had formerly battled with that which was of a wilder and more desperate character. Shaking off the dejection and sinking of spirit which he felt creeping upon him, he resumed, at the same time, the air and attitude of an attentive sentinel, and re-

called his mind to the duties of his watch, which, in the tumult of his feelings, he had almost forgotten. But what was his astonishment when, as he looked out on the clear landscape, there passed from the bridge towards the forest, crossing him in the broad moonlight, the living and moving likeness of Anne of Geierstein!

CHAPTER X

We know not when we sleep nor when we wake.
Visions distinct and perfect cross our eye,
Which to the slumberer seem realities ;
And while they waked, some men have seen such sights
As set at nought the evidence of sense,
And left them well persuaded they were dreaming.

Anonymous.

THE apparition of Anne of Geierstein crossed her lover—her admirer, at least, we must call him—within shorter time than we can tell the story. But it was distinct, perfect, and undoubted. In the very instant when the young Englishman, shaking off his fond despondency, raised his head to look out upon the scene of his watch, she came from the nearer end of the bridge, crossing the path of the sentinel, upon whom she did not even cast a look, and passed with a rapid yet steady pace towards the verge of the woodland.

It would have been natural, though Arthur had been directed not to challenge persons who left the castle, but only such as might approach it, that he should nevertheless, had it only been in mere civility, have held some communication, however slight, with the maiden as she crossed his post. But the suddenness of her appearance took from him for the instant both speech and motion. It seemed as if his own imagination had raised up a phantom, presenting to his outward senses the form and features which engrossed his mind ; and he was silent, partly at least from the idea that what he gazed upon was immaterial and not of this world.

It would have been no less natural that Anne of Geierstein should have in some manner acknowledged the person who had spent a considerable time under the same roof with her, had been often her partner in the dance, and her companion in the field ; but she did not evince the slightest token of recognition, nor even look towards him as she passed ; her eye was on the wood, to which she advanced swiftly and steadily, and she was hidden by its boughs ere Arthur had recollected himself sufficiently to determine what to do.

His first feeling was anger at himself for suffering her to pass unquestioned, when it might well chance that, upon

any errand which called her forth at so extraordinary a time and place, he might have been enabled to afford her assistance, or at least advice. This sentiment was for a short time so predominant, that he ran towards the place where he had seen the skirt of her dress disappear, and, whispering her name as loud as the fear of alarming the castle permitted, conjured her to return, and hear him but for a few brief moments. No answer, however, was returned ; and when the branches of the trees began to darken over his head and to intercept the moonlight, he recollected that he was leaving his post, and exposing his fellow-travelers, who were trusting in his vigilance, to the danger of surprise.

He hastened, therefore, back to the castle-gate, with matter for deeper and more inextricable doubt and anxiety than had occupied him during the commencement of his watch. He asked himself in vain, with what purpose that modest young maiden, whose manners were frank, but whose conduct had always seemed so delicate and reserved, could sally forth at midnight like a damsel-errant in romance, when she was in a strange country and suspicious neighborhood ; yet he rejected, as he would have shrunk from blasphemy, any interpretation which would have thrown censure upon Anne of Geierstein. No, nothing was she capable of doing for which a friend could have to blush. But connecting her previous agitation with the extraordinary fact of her leaving the castle, alone and defenseless, at such an hour, Arthur necessarily concluded it must argue some cogent reason, and, as was most likely, of an unpleasant nature. "I will watch her return," he internally uttered, "and, if she will give me an opportunity, I will convey to her the assurance that there is one faithful bosom in her neighborhood, which is bound in honor and gratitude to pour out every drop of its blood, if by doing so it can protect her from the slightest inconvenience. This is no silly flight of romance, for which common sense has a right to reproach me : it is only what I ought to do, what I must do, or forego every claim to be termed a man of honesty or honor."

Yet scarce did the young man think himself anchored on a resolution which seemed unobjectionable than his thoughts were again adrift. He reflected that Anne might have a desire to visit the neighboring town of Bâle, to which she had been invited the day before, and where her uncle had friends. It was indeed an uncommon hour to select for such a purpose ; but Arthur was aware that the Swiss maidens feared neither solitary walks nor late hours, and that Anne

would have walked among her own hills by moonlight much farther than the distance betwixt their place of encampment and Bâle, to see a sick friend, or for any similar purpose. To press himself on her confidence, then, might be impertinence, not kindness; and as she had passed him without taking the slightest notice of his presence, it was evident she did not mean voluntarily to make him her confidant; and probably she was involved in no difficulties where his aid could be useful. In that case, the duty of a gentleman was to permit her to return as she had gone forth, unnoticed and unquestioned, leaving it with herself to hold communication with him or not as she should choose.

Another idea, belonging to the age, also passed through his mind, though it made no strong impression upon it. This form, so perfectly resembling Anne of Geierstein, might be a deception of the sight, or it might be one of those fantastic apparitions concerning which there were so many tales told in all countries, and of which Switzerland and Germany had, as Arthur well knew, their full share. The internal and undefinable feelings which restrained him from accosting the maiden, as might have been natural for him to have done, are easily explained, on the supposition that his mortal frame shrunk from an encounter with a being of a different nature. There had also been some expressions of the magistrate of Bâle which might apply to the castle's being liable to be haunted by beings from another world. But though the general belief in such ghostly apparitions prevented the Englishman from being positively incredulous on the subject, yet the instructions of his father, a man of great intrepidity and distinguished good sense, had taught him to be extremely unwilling to refer anything to supernatural interferences which was capable of explanation by ordinary rules; and he therefore shook off, without difficulty, any feelings of superstitious fear which for an instant connected itself with his nocturnal adventure. He resolved finally to suppress all disquieting conjecture on the subject, and to await firmly, if not patiently, the return of the fair vision, which, if it should not fully explain the mystery, seemed at least to afford the only chance of throwing light upon it.

Fixed, therefore, in purpose, he traversed the walk which his duty permitted, with his eyes fixed on the part of the forest where he had seen the beloved form disappear, and forgetful for the moment that his watch had any other purpose than to observe her return. But from this abstraction of mind he was roused by a distant sound in the forest,

which seemed the clash of armor. Recalled at once to a sense of his duty, and its importance to his father and his fellow-travelers, Arthur planted himself on the temporary bridge where a stand could best be made, and turned both eyes and ears to watch for approaching danger. The sound of arms and footsteps came nearer : spears and helmets advanced from the greenwood glade, and twinkled in the moonlight. But the stately form of Rudolph Donnerhugel, marching in front, was easily recognized, and announced to our sentinel the return of the patrol. Upon their approach to the bridge, the challenge and interchange of sign and countersign, which is usual on such occasions, took place in due form ; and as Rudolph's party filed off one after another into the castle, he commanded them to wake their companions, with whom he intended to renew the patrol, and at the same time to send a relief to Arthur Philipson, whose watch on the bridge was now ended. This last fact was confirmed by the deep and distant toll of the minster clock from the town of Bâle, which, prolonging its sullen sound over field and forest, announced that midnight was past.

"And now, comrade," continued Rudolph to the Englishman, "have the cold air and long watch determined thee to retire to food and rest, or dost thou still hold the intention of partaking our rounds ?"

In very truth it would have been Arthur's choice to have remained in the place where he was, for the purpose of watching Anne of Geierstein's return from her mysterious excursion. He could not easily have found an excuse for this, however, and he was unwilling to give the haughty Donnerhugel the least suspicion that he was inferior in hardihood, or in the power of enduring fatigue, to any of the tall mountaineers whose companion he chanced to be for the present. He did not, therefore, indulge even a moment's hesitation ; but while he restored the borrowed partizan to the sluggish Sigismund, who came from the castle yawning and stretching himself like one whose slumbers had been broken by no welcome summons when they were deepest and sweetest, he acquainted Rudolph that he retained his purpose of partaking in his reconnoitering duty. They were speedily joined by the rest of the patroling party, amongst whom was Rudiger, the eldest son of the Landamman of Unterwalden ; and when, led by the Bernese champion, they had reached the skirts of the forest, Rudolph commanded three of them to attend Rudiger Biederman.

"Thou wilt make thy round to the left side," said the Bernese, "I will draw off to the right; see thou keepest a good lookout, and we will meet merrily at the place appointed. Take one of the hounds with you. I will keep Wolf-fanger, who will open on a Burgundian as readily as on a bear."

Rudiger moved off with his party to the left, according to the directions received; and Rudolph, having sent forward one of his number in front and stationed another in the rear, commanded the third to follow himself and Arthur Philipson, who thus constituted the main body of the patrol. Having intimated to their immediate attendant to keep at such distance as to allow them freedom of conversation, Rudolph addressed the Englishman with the familiarity which their recent friendship had created. "And now, King Arthur, what thinks the Majesty of England of our Helvetian youth? Could they win guerdon in tilt or tourney, thinkest thou, noble prince? Or would they rank but amongst the coward knights of Cornouailles?"*

"For tilt and tourney I cannot answer," said Arthur, summing up his spirits to reply, "because I never beheld one of you mounted on a steed, or having spear in rest. But if strong limbs and stout hearts are to be considered, I would match you Swiss gallants with those of any country in the universe where manhood is to be looked for, whether it be in heart or hand."

"Thou speakest us fair; and, young Englishman," said Rudolph, "know that we think as highly of thee, of which I will presently afford thee a proof. Thou talked'st but now of horses. I know but little of them; yet I judge thou wouldst not buy a steed which thou hadst only seen covered with trappings, or encumbered with saddle and bridle, but wouldst desire to look at him when stripped, and in his natural state of freedom?"

"Ay, marry, would I," said Arthur. "Thou hast spoken on that as if thou hadst been born in a district called Yorkshire, which men call the merriest part of Merry England."

"Then I tell thee," said Rudolph Donnerhugel, "that thou hast seen our Swiss youth but half, since thou hast observed them as yet only in their submissive attendance upon the elders of their cantons, or, at most, in their mountain sports, which, though they may show men's outward strength and activity, can throw no light on the spirit and disposi-

* The chivalry of Cornwall are generally undervalued in the Norman-French romances. The cause is difficult to discover.

tion by which that strength and activity are to be guided and directed in matters of high enterprise."

The Swiss probably designed that these remarks should excite the curiosity of the stranger. But the Englishman had the image, look, and form of Anne of Geierstein, as she had passed him in the silent hours of his watch, too constantly before him to enter willingly upon a subject of conversation totally foreign to what agitated his mind. He, therefore, only compelled himself to reply in civility, that he had no doubt his esteem for the Swiss, both aged and young, would increase in proportion with his more intimate knowledge of the nation.

He was then silent; and Donnerhugel, disappointed, perhaps, at having failed to excite his curiosity, walked also in silence by his side. Arthur, meanwhile, was considering with himself whether he should mention to his companion the circumstance which occupied his own mind, in the hope that the kinsman of Anne of Geierstein, and ancient friend of her house, might be able to throw some light on the subject.

But he felt within his mind an insurmountable objection to converse with the Swiss on a subject in which Anne was concerned. That Rudolph made pretensions to her favor could hardly be doubted; and though Arthur, had the question been put to him, must in common consistency have resigned all competition on the subject, still he could not bear to think on the possibility of his rival's success, and would not willingly have endured to hear him pronounce her name.

Perhaps it was owing to this secret irritability that Arthur, though he made every effort to conceal and to overcome the sensation, still felt a secret dislike to Rudolph Donnerhugel, whose frank, but somewhat coarse, familiarity was mingled with a certain air of protection, and patronage, which the Englishman thought was by no means called for. He met the openness of the Bernese, indeed, with equal frankness, but he was ever and anon tempted to reject or repel the tone of superiority by which it was accompanied. The circumstances of their duel had given the Swiss no ground for such triumph; nor did Arthur feel himself included in that roll of the Swiss youth over whom Rudolph exercised domination, by general consent. So little did Philipson relish this affectation of superiority, that the poor jest that termed him King Arthur, although quite indifferent to him when applied by any of the Biedermans, was rather offensive when Rudolph took the same liberty; so that he often found him

self in the awkward condition of one who is internally irritated, without having any outward manner of testifying it with propriety. Undoubtedly, the root of all this tacit dislike to the young Bernese was a feeling of rivalry; but it was a feeling which Arthur dared not avow even to himself. It was sufficiently powerful, however, to suppress the slight inclination he had felt to speak with Rudolph on the passage of the night which had most interested him; and as the topic of conversation introduced by his companion had been suffered to drop, they walked on side by side in silence, "with the beard on the shoulder," as the Spaniard says—looking round, that is, on all hands—and thus performing the duty of a vigilant watch.

At length, after they had walked nearly a mile through forest and field, making a circuit around the ruins of Graffslust, of such an extent as to leave no room for an ambush betwixt them and the place, the old hound, led by the vidette who was foremost, stopped and uttered a low growl.

"How now, Wolf-fanger!" said Rudolph, advancing. "What, old fellow! dost thou not know friends from foes? Come, what sayest thou, on better thoughts? Thou must not lose character in thy old age; try it again."

The dog raised his head, snuffed the air all around, as if he understood what his master had said, then shook his head and tail, as if answering to his voice.

"Why, there it is now," said Donnerhugel, patting the animal's shaggy back; "second thoughts are worth gold: thou seest it is a friend after all."

The dog again shook his tail, and moved forward with the same unconcern as before; Rudolph fell back into his place and his companion said to him—

"We are about to meet Rudiger and our companions, I suppose, and the dog hears their footsteps, though we cannot."

"It can scarcely yet be Rudiger," said the Bernese: "his walk around the castle is of a wider circumference than ours. Some one approaches, however, for Wolf-fanger is again dissatisfied. Look sharply out on all sides."

As Rudolph gave his party the word to be on the alert, they reached an open glade, in which were scattered, at considerable distance from each other, some old pine-trees of gigantic size, which seemed yet huger and blacker than ordinary, from their broad sable tops and shattered branches being displayed against the clear and white moonlight. "We shall here, at least," said the Swiss, "have the advantage of

seeing clearly whatever approaches. But I judge," said he, after looking around for a minute, "it is but some wolf or deer that has crossed our path, and the scent disturbs the hound. Hold—stop—yes, it must be so—he goes on."

The dog accordingly proceeded, after having given some signs of doubt, uncertainty, and even anxiety. Apparently, however, he became reconciled to what had disturbed him, and proceeded once more in the ordinary manner.

"This is singular!" said Arthur Philipson; "and, to my thinking, I saw an object close by yonder patch of thicket, where, as well as I can guess, a few thorn and hazel bushes surround the stems of four or five large trees."

"My eye has been on that very thicket for these five minutes past, and I saw nothing," said Rudolph.

"Nay, but," answered the young Englishman, "I saw the object, whatever it was, while you were engaged in attending to the dog. And by your permission, I will forward and examine the spot."

"Were you, strictly speaking, under my command," said Donnerhugel, "I would command you to keep your place. If they be foes, it is essential that we should remain together. But you are a volunteer in our watch, and therefore may use your freedom."

"I thank you," answered Arthur, and sprung quickly forward.

He felt, indeed, at the moment, that he was not acting courteously as an individual, nor perhaps correctly as a soldier; and that he ought to have rendered obedience, for the time, to the captain of the party in which he had enlisted himself. But, on the other hand, the object which he had seen, though at a distance and imperfectly, seemed to bear a resemblance to the retiring form of Anne of Geierstein, as she had vanished from his eyes, an hour or two before, under the cover of the forest; and his ungovernable curiosity to ascertain whether it might not be the maiden in person allowed him to listen to no other consideration.

Ere Rudolph had spoken out his few words of reply, Arthur was half-way to the thicket. It was, as it had seemed at a distance, of small extent, and not fitted to hide any person who did not actually couch down amongst the dwarf bushes and underwood. Anything white, also, which bore the human size and form, must, he thought, have been discovered among the dark-red stems and swarthy-colored bushes which were before him. These observations were mingled with other thoughts. If it was Anne of Geierstein whom he

had a second time seen, she must have left the more open path, desirous probably of avoiding notice; and what right or title had he to direct upon her the observation of the patrol? He had, he thought, observed that in general the maiden rather repelled than encouraged the attentions of Rudolph Donnerhugel; or, where it would have been discourteous to have rejected them entirely, that she endured without encouraging them. What, then, could be the propriety of his intruding upon her private walk, singular, indeed, from time and place, but which, on that account, she might be more desirous to keep secret from the observation of one who was disagreeable to her? Nay, was it not possible that Rudolph might derive advantage to his otherwise unacceptable suit by possessing the knowledge of something which the maiden desired to be concealed?

As these thoughts pressed upon him, Arthur made a pause, with his eyes fixed on the thicket, from which he was now scarce thirty yards distant; and although scrutinizing it with all the keen accuracy which his uncertainty and anxiety dictated, he was actuated by a strong feeling that it would be wisest to turn back to his companions, and report to Rudolph that his eyes had deceived him.

But, while he was yet undecided whether to advance or return, the object which he had seen became again visible on the verge of the thicket, and advanced straight towards him, bearing, as on the former occasion, the exact dress and figure of Anne of Geierstein! This vision—for the time, place, and suddenness of the appearance made it seem rather an illusion than a reality—struck Arthur with surprise, which amounted to terror. The figure passed within a spear's-length, unchallenged by him, and giving not the slightest sign of recognition; and, directing its course to the right hand of Rudolph and the two or three who were with him, was again lost among the broken ground and bushes.

Once more the young man was reduced to a state of the most inextricable doubt; nor was he roused from the stupor into which he was thrown till the voice of the Bernese sounded in his ear—"Why, how now, King Arthur; art thou asleep, or art thou wounded?"

"Neither," said Philipson, collecting himself; "only much surprised."

"Surprised! and at what, most royal——"

"Forbear foolery," said Arthur, somewhat sternly, "and answer as thou art a man—Did she not meet thee?—didst thou not see her?"

"See her!—see whom?" said Donnerhugel. "I saw no one. And I could have sworn you had seen no one either, for I had you in my eye the whole time of your absence, excepting two or three moments. If you saw aught, why gave you not the alarm?"

"Because it was only a woman," answered Arthur, faintly.

"Only a woman!" repeated Rudolph, in a tone of contempt. "By my honest word, King Arthur, if I had not seen pretty flashes of valor fly from thee at times, I should be apt to think that thou hadst only a woman's courage thyself. Strange, that a shadow by night, or a precipice in the day, should quell so bold a spirit as thou hast often shown——"

"And as I will ever show, when occasion demands it," interrupted the Englishman, with recovered spirit. "But I swear to you that, if I be now daunted, it is by no merely earthly fears that my mind hath been for a moment subdued."

"Let us proceed on our walk," said Rudolph: "we must not neglect the safety of our friends. This appearance of which thou speakest may be but a trick to interrupt our duty."

They moved on through the moonlight glades. A minute's reflection restored young Philipson to his full recollection, and with that to the painful consciousness that he had played a ridiculous and unworthy part in the presence of the person whom (of the male sex, at least) he would the very last have chosen as a witness of his weakness.

He ran hastily over the relations which stood betwixt himself, Donnerhugel, the Landamman, his niece, and the rest of that family; and, contrary to the opinion which he had entertained but a short while before, settled in his own mind that it was his duty to mention to the immediate leader under whom he had placed himself the appearance which he had twice observed in the course of that night's duty. There might be family circumstances—the payment of a vow, perhaps, or some such reason—which might render intelligible to her connections the behavior of this young lady. Besides, he was for the present a soldier on duty, and these mysteries might be fraught with evils to be anticipated or guarded against; in either case, his companions were entitled to be made aware of what he had seen. It must be supposed that this resolution was adopted when the sense of duty, and of shame for the weakness which he had exhibited, had for the

moment subdued Arthur's personal feelings towards Anne of Geierstein—feelings, also, liable to be chilled by the mysterious uncertainty which the events of that evening had cast, like a thick mist, around the object of them.

While the Englishman's reflections were taking this turn, his captain or companion, after a silence of several minutes, at length addressed him.

"I believe," he said, "my dear comrade, that, as being at present your officer, I have some title to hear from you the report of what you have just now seen, since it must be something of importance which could so strongly agitate a mind so firm as yours. But if, in your own opinion, it consists with the general safety to delay your report of what you have seen until we return to the castle, and then to deliver it to the private ear of the Landamman, you have only to intimate your purpose; and, far from urging you to place confidence in me personally, though I hope I am not undeserving of it, I will authorize your leaving us, and returning instantly to the castle."

This proposal touched him to whom it was made exactly in the right place. An absolute demand of his confidence might perhaps have been declined; the tone of moderate request and conciliation fell presently in with the Englishman's own reflections.

"I am sensible," he said, "hauptman, that I ought to mention to you that which I have seen to-night; but on the first occasion it did not fall within my duty to do so, and now that I have a second time witnessed the same appearance, I have felt for these few seconds so much surprised at what I have seen, that even yet I can scarce find words to express it."

"As I cannot guess what you may have to say," replied the Bernese, "I must beseech you to be explicit. We are but poor readers of riddles, we thick-headed Switzers."

"Yet it is but a riddle which I have to place before you, Rudolph Donnerhugel," answered the Englishman, "and a riddle which is far beyond my own guessing at." He then proceeded, though not without hesitation, "While you were performing your first patrol amongst the ruins, a female crossed the bridge from within the castle, walked by my post without saying a single word, and vanished under the shadows of the forest."

"Ha!" exclaimed Donnerhugel, and made no further answer.

Arthur proceeded. "Within these five minutes, the same

female form passed me a second time, issuing from the little thicket and clump of firs, and disappeared, without exchanging a word. Know, farther, this apparition bore the form, face, gait, and dress of your kinswoman, Anne of Geierstein."

"Singular enough," said Rudolph, in a tone of incredulity. "I must not, I suppose, dispute your word, for you would receive doubt on my part as a mortal injury—such is your Northern chivalry. Yet, let me say, I have eyes as well as you, and I scarce think they quitted you for a minute. We were not fifty yards from the place where I found you standing in amazement. How, therefore, should not we also have seen that which you say and think you saw?"

"To that I can give no answer," said Arthur. "Perhaps your eyes were not exactly turned upon me during the short space in which I saw this form. Perhaps it might be visible —as they say fantastic appearances sometimes are—to only one person at a time."

"You suppose, then, that the appearance was imaginary or fantastic?" said the Bernese.

"Can I tell you?" replied the Englishman. "The church gives its warrant that there are such things; and surely it is more natural to belive this apparition to be an illusion than to suppose that Anne of Geierstein, a gentle and well-nurtured maiden, should be traversing the woods at this wild hour, when safety and propriety so strongly recommend her being within doors."

"There is much in what you say," said Rudolph; "and yet there are stories afloat, though few care to mention them, which seem to allege that Anne of Geierstein is not altogether such as other maidens; and that she has been met with, in body and spirit, where she could hardly have come by her own unassisted efforts."

"Ha!" said Arthur; "so young, so beautiful, and already in league with the destroyer of mankind! It is impossible."

"I said not so," replied the Bernese; "nor have I leisure at present to explain my meaning more fully. As we return to the castle of Graffslust, I may have an opportunity to tell you more. But I chiefly brought you on this patrol to introduce you to some friends, whom you will be pleased to know, and who desire your acquaintance; and it is here I expect to meet them."

So saying, he turned round the projecting corner of a rock, and an unexpected scene was presented to the eyes of the young Englishman.

In a sort of nook, or corner, screened by the rocky projection, there burned a large fire of wood, and around it sat, reclined, or lay, twelve or fifteen young men in the Swiss garb, but decorated with ornaments and embroidery, which reflected back the light of the fire. The same red gleam was returned by silver wine-cups, which circulated from hand to hand with the flasks which filled them. Arthur could also observe the relics of a banquet, to which due honor seemed to have been lately rendered.

The revelers started joyfully up at the sight of Donnerhugel and his companions, and saluted him, easily distinguished as he was by his stature, by the title of captain, warmly and exultingly uttered, while, at the same time, every tendency to noisy acclamation was cautiously suppressed. The zeal indicated that Rudolph came most welcome; the caution that he came in secret, and was to be received with mystery.

To the general greeting he answered—"I thank you, my brave comrades. Has Rudiger yet reached you?"

"Thou see'st he has not," said one of the party; "had it been so, we would have detained him here till your coming, brave captain."

"He has loitered on his patrol," said the Bernese. "We, too, were delayed, yet we are here before him. I bring with me, comrades, the brave Englishmen whom I mentioned to you as a desirable associate in our daring purpose."

"He is welcome—most welcome to us," said a young man, whose richly embroidered dress of azure blue gave him an air of authority—"most welcome is he, if he brings with him a heart and a hand to serve our noble task."

"For both I will be responsible," said Rudolph. "Pass the wine-cup, then, to the success of our glorious enterprise, and the health of this our new associate!"

While they were replenishing the cups with wine of a quality far superior to any which Arthur had yet tasted in these regions, he thought it right, before engaging himself in the pledge to learn the secret objects of the association which seemed desirous of adopting him.

"Before I engage my poor services to you, fair sirs, since it pleases you to desire them, permit me," he said, "to ask the purpose and character of the undertaking in which they are to be employed?"

"Shouldest thou have brought him hither," said the cavalier in blue to Rudolph, "without satisfying him and thyself on that point?"

"To the general greeting he answered—'I thank you, my brave comrades.'"

"Care not thou about it, Laurenz," replied the Bernese, "I know my man. Be it known, then, to you, my good friend," he continued, addressing the Englishmen, "that my comrades and I are determined at once to declare the freedom of the Swiss commerce, and to resist to the death, if it be necessary, all unlawful and extortionate demands on the part of our neighbors."

"I understand so much," said the young Englishman, "and that the present deputation proceeds to the Duke of Burgundy with remonstrances to that effect."

"Hear me," replied Rudolph. "The question is like to be brought to a bloody determination long ere we see the Duke of Burgundy's most august and most gracious countenance. That his influence should be used to exclude us from Bâle, a neutral town, and pertaining to the Empire, gives us cause to expect the worst reception when we enter his own dominions. We have every reason to think that we might have suffered from his hatred already, but for the vigilance of the ward which we have kept. Horsemen, from the direction of La Ferette, have this night reconnoietred our posts; and had they not found us prepared, we had, without question, been attacked in our quarters. But since we have escaped to-night, we must take care for to-morrow. For this purpose, a number of the bravest youth of the city of Bâle, incensed at the pusillanimity of their magistrates, are determined to join us, in order to wipe away the disgrace which the cowardly inhospitality of their magistracy has brought on their native place."

"That we will do ere the sun, that will rise two hours hence, shall sink into the western sky," said the cavalier in blue; and those around joined him in stern assent.

"Gentle sirs," replied Arthur, when there was a pause, "let me remind you that the embassy which you attend is a peaceful one, and that those who act as its escort ought to avoid anything which can augment the differences which it comes to reconcile. You cannot expect to receive offense in the Duke's dominions, the privileges of envoys being respected in all civilized countries: and you will, I am sure, desire to offer none."

"We may be subjected to insult, however," replied the Bernese, "and that through your concerns, Arthur Philipson, and those of thy father."

"I understand you not," replied Philipson.

"Your father," answered Donnerhugel, "is a merchant, and bears with him wares of small bulk but high value?"

"He does so," answered Arthur; "and what of that?"

"Marry," answered Rudolph, "that, if it be not better looked to, the Bandog of Burgundy is like to fall heir to a large proportion of your silks, satins, and jewelry work."

"Silks, satins, and jewels!" exclaimed another of the revelers; "such wares will not pass toll-free where Archibald of Hagenbach hath authority."

"Fair sirs," resumed Arthur, after a moment's consideration, "these wares are my father's property, not mine; and it is for him, not me, to pronounce how much of them he might be content to part with in the way of toll, rather than give occasion to a fray, in which his companions, who have received him into their society, must be exposed to injury as well as himself. I can only say, that he has weighty affairs at the court of Burgundy, which must render him desirous of reaching it in peace with all men; and it is my private belief that, rather than incur the loss and danger of a broil with the garrison of La Ferette, he would be contented to sacrifice all the property which he has at present with him. Therefore, I must request of you, gentlemen, a space to consult his pleasure on this occasion; assuring you that, if it be his will to resist the payment of these duties to Burgundy, you shall find in me one who is fully determined to fight to the last drop of his blood."

"Good King Arthur," said Rudolph, "thou art a dutiful observer of the Fourth [Fifth] Commandment, and thy days shall be long in the land. Do not suppose us neglectful of the same duty, although, for the present, we conceive ourselves bound, in the first place, to attend to the weal of our country, the common parent of our fathers and ourselves. But, as you know our profound respect for the Landammans you need not fear that we shall willingly offer him offenses by rashly engaging in hostilities, or without some weighty reason; and an attempt to plunder his guest would have been met, on his part, with resistance to the death. I had hoped to find both you and your father prompt enough to resent such a gross injury. Nevertheless, if your father inclines to present his fleece to be shorn by Archibald of Hagenbach, whose scissors, he will find, clip pretty closely, it would be unnecessary and uncivil in us to interpose. Meantime, you have the advantage of knowing that, in case the governor of La Ferette should be disposed to strip you of skin as well as fleece, there are more men close at hand than you looked for, whom you will find both able and willing to render you prompt assistance."

"On these terms," said the Englishman, "I make my acknowledgments to these gentlemen of Bâle, or whatever other country hath sent them forth, and pledge them in a brotherly cup to our farther and more intimate acquaintance."

"Health and prosperity to the United Cantons and their friends!" answered the Blue Cavalier. "And death and confusion to all besides."

The cups were replenished: and, instead of a shout of applause, the young men around testified their devoted determination to the cause which was thus announced by grasping each other's hands, and then brandishing their weapons with a fierce yet noiseless gesture.

"Thus," said Rudolph Donnerhugel, "our illustrious ancestors, the fathers of Swiss independence, met in the immortal field of Rutli, between Uri and Unterwalden. Thus they swore to each other, under the blue firmament of heaven, that they would restore the liberty of their oppressed country; and history can tell how well they kept their word."

"And she shall record," said the Blue Cavalier, "how well the present Switzers can preserve the freedom which their fathers won. Proceed in your rounds, good Rudolph, and be assured that, at the signal of the hauptman, the soldiers will not be far absent; all is arranged as formerly, unless you have new orders to give us."

"Hark thee hither, Laurenz," said Rudolph to the Blue Cavalier; and Arthur could hear him say, "Beware, my friend, that the Rhine wine be not abused; if there is too much provision of it, manage to destroy the flasks—a mule may stumble, thou knowest, or so. Give not way to Rudiger in this. He is grown a winebibber since he joined us. We must bring both heart and hand to what may be done tomorrow." They then whispered so low that Arthur could hear nothing of their farther conference, and bid each other adieu, after clasping hands, as if they were renewing some solemn pledge of union.

Rudolph and his party then moved forward, and were scarce out of sight of their new associates, when the vidette, or foremost of their patrol, gave the signal of alarm. Arthur's heart leaped to his lips. "It is Anne of Geierstein!" he said internally.

"The dogs are silent," said the Bernese. "Those who approach must be the companions of our watch."

They proved, accordingly, to be Ruliger and his party, who, halting on the appearance of their comrades, made and

underwent a formal challenge—such advance had the Swiss already made in military discipline, which was but little and rudely studied by the infantry in other parts of Europe. Arthur could hear Rudolph take his friend Rudiger to task for not meeting him at the halting-place appointed. "It leads to new revelry on your arrival," he said, "and to-morrow must find us cool and determined."

"Cool as an icicle, noble hauptman," answered the son of the Landamman, "and determined as the rock it hangs upon."

Rudolph again recommended temperance, and the youug Biederman promised compliance. The two parties passed each other with friendly though silent greeting; and there was soon a considerable distance between them.

The country was more open on the side of the castle around which their duty now led them than where it lay opposite to the principal gate. The glades were broad, the trees thinly scattered over pasture-land, and there were no thickets, ravines, or similar places of ambush, so that the eye might, in the clear moonlight, well command the country.

"Hear," said Rudolph, "we may judge ourselves secure enough for some conference; and therefore may I ask thee, Arthur of England, now thou hast seen us more closely, what thinkest thou of the Switzer youth? If thou hast learned less than I could have wished, thank thine own uncommunicative temper, which retired in some degree from our confidence."

"Only in so far as I could not have answered, and therefore ought not to have received, it," said Arthur. "The judgment I have been enabled to form amounts, in few words, to this: Your purposes are lofty and noble as your mountains; but the stranger from the low country is not accustomed to tread the circuitous path by which you ascend them. My foot has been always accustomed to move straight forward upon the greensward."

"You speak in riddles," answered the Bernese.

"Not so," returned the Englishman. "I think you ought plainly to mention to your seniors—the nominal leaders of young men who seem well disposed to take their own road—that you expect an attack in the neighborhood of La Ferette, and hope for assistance from some of the townsmen of Bêle."

"Ay, truly," answered Donnerhugel; "and the Landamman would stop his journey till he despatched a messenger for a safe-conduct to the Duke of Burgundy, and should he grant it, there were an end of all hope of war."

"True," replied Arthur; "but the Landamman would thereby obtain his own principal object, and the sole purpose of the mission—that is, the establishment of peace."

"Peace—peace!" answered the Bernese hastily. "Were my wishes alone to be opposed to those of Arnold Biederman, I know so much of his honor and faith, I would sheathe my sword, even if my most mortal enemy stood before me. But mine is not the single wish of a single man: the whole of my canton and that of Soleure are determined on war. It was by war, noble war, that our fathers came forth from the house of their captivity; it was by war, successful and glorious war, that a race, who had been held scarce so much worth thinking on as the oxen which they goaded, emerged at once into liberty and consequence, and were honored because they were feared, as much as they had been formerly despised because they were unresisting."

"This may be all very true," said the young Englishman; "but, in my opinion, the object of your mission has been determined by your Diet or House of Commons. They have resolved to send you with others as messengers of peace; but you are secretly blowing the coals of war, and while all, or most, of your senior colleagues are setting out to-morrow in expectation of a peaceful journey, you stand prepared for a combat, and look for the means of giving cause for it."

"And is it not well that I do stand so prepared?" answered Rudolph. "If our reception in Burgundy's dependencies be peaceful, as you say the rest of the deputation expect, my precautions will be needless; but as least they can do no harm. If it prove otherwise, I shall be the means of averting a great misfortune from my colleagues, my kinsman Arnold Biederman, my fair cousin Anne, your father, yourself—from all of us, in short, who are joyously traveling together."

Arthur shook his head. "There is something in all this," he said, "which I understand not, and will not seek to understand. I only pray that you will not make my father's concerns the subject of breaking truce; it may, as you hint, involve the Landamman in a quarrel, which he might otherwise have avoided. I am sure my father will never forgive it."

"I have pledged my word," said Rudolph, "already to that effect. But if he should like the usage of the Bandog of Burgundy less than you seem to apprehended he will, there is no harm in your knowing that, in time of need, he may be well and actively supported."

"I am greatly obliged by the assurance," replied the Englishman.

"And thou mayest thyself, my friend," continued Rudolph, "take a warning from what thou hast heard: men go not to a bridal in armor, nor to a brawl in silken doublet."

"I will be clad to meet the worst," said Arthur; "and for that purpose I will don a light hauberk of well-tempered steel, proof against spear or arrow; and I thank you for your kindly counsel."

"Nay, thank not me," said Rudolph: "I were ill deserving to be a leader did I not make those who are to follow me, more especially so trusty a follower as thou art, aware of the time when they should buckle on their armor and prepare for hard blows."

Here the conversation paused for a moment or two, neither of the speakers being entirely contented with his companion, although neither pressed any further remark.

The Bernese, judging from the feelings which he had seen predominate among the traders of his own country, had entertained little doubt that the Englishman, finding himself powerfully supported in point of force, would have caught at the opportunity to resist paying the exorbitant imposts with which he was threatened at the next town, which probably, without any effort on Rudolph's part, have led to breaking off the truce on the part of Arnold Biederman himself, and to an instant declaration of hostilities. On the other hand, young Philipson could not understand or approve of Donnerhugel's conduct, who, himself a member of a peaceful deputation, seemed to be animated with the purpose of seizing an opportunity to kindle the flames of war.

Occupied by these various reflections, they walked side by side for some time without speaking together, until Rudolph broke silence.

"Your curiosity is then ended, sir Englishman," said he, "respecting the apparition of Anne of Geierstein?"

"Far from it," replied Philipson; "but I would unwillingly intrude any questions on you while you are busy with the duties of your patrol."

"That may be considered as over," said the Bernese, "for there is not a bush near us to cover a Burgundian knave, and a glance around us from to time is all that is now needful to prevent surprise. And so, listen while I tell a tale never sung or harped in hall or bower, and which, I begin to think, deserves as much credit, at least, as is due to the Tales of

the Round Table, which ancient troubadours and minnesingers dole out to us as the authentic chronicler of your renowned namesake.

"Of Anne's ancestors on the male side of the house," continued Rudolph, "I daresay you have heard enough, and are well aware how they dwelt in the old walls at Geierstein beside the cascade, grinding their vassals, devouring the substance of their less powerful neighbors, and plundering the goods of the travelers whom ill luck sent within ken of the vulture's eyrie, the one year; and in the next, wearying the shrines for mercy for their trespasses, overwhelming the priests with the wealth which they showered upon them, and, finally, vowing vows, and making pilgrimages, sometimes as palmers, sometimes as crusaders, as far as Jerusalem itself, to atone for the iniquities which they had committed without hesitation or struggle of conscience."

"Such, I have understood," replied the young Englishman, "was the history of the house of Geierstein, till Arnold, or his immediate ancestors, exchanged the lance for the sheep-hook."

"But it is said," replied the Bernese, "that the powerful and wealthy Barons of Arnheim, of Swabia, whose only female descendant became the wife to Count Albert of Geierstein, and the mother of this young person, whom Swiss call simply Anne, and Germans Countess Anne of Geierstein, were nobles of a different caste. They did not restrict their lives within the limits of sinning and repenting—of plundering harmless peasants and pampering fat monks; but were distinguished for something more than building castles with dungeons and *folterkammers*, or torture-chambers, and founding monasteries with galilees and refectories.

"These same Barons of Arnheim were men who strove to enlarge the boundaries of human knowledge, and converted their castle into a species of college, where there were more ancient volumes than the monks have piled together in the library of St. Gall. Nor were their studies in books alone. Deep buried in their private laboratories, they attained secrets which were afterwards transmitted through the race from father to son, and were supposed to have approached nearly to the deepest recesses of alchemy. The report of their wisdom and their wealth was often brought to the Imperial footstool; and in the frequent disputes which the Emperors maintained with the Popes of old, it is said they were encouraged, if not instigated, by the counsels of the Barons of Arnheim, and supported by their treasures. It

was, perhaps, such a course of politics, joined to the unusual and mysterious studies which the family of Arnheim so long pursued, which excited against them the generally received opinion that they were assisted in their superhuman researches by supernatural influences. The priests were active in forwarding this cry against men who, perhaps, had no other fault than that of being wiser than themselves.

"'Look what guests,' they said, 'are received in the halls of Arnheim! Let a Christian knight, crippled in war with the Saracens, present himself on the drawbridge, he is guerdoned with a crust and a cup of wine, and required to pass on his way. If a palmer, redolent of the sanctity acquired by his recent visits to the most holy shrines, and by the sacred relics which attest and reward his toil, approach the unhallowed walls, the warder bends his cross-bow, and the porter shuts the gate, as if the wandering saint brought the plague with him from Palestine. But comes there a graybearded, glib-tongued Greek, with his parchment scrolls, the very letters of which are painful to Christian eyes; comes there a Jewish Rabbin, with his Talmud and Cabala; comes there a swarthy sunburnt Moor, who can boast of having read the language of the stars in Chaldea, the cradle of astrological science—lo, the wandering impostor or sorcerer occupies the highest seat at the Baron of Arnheim's board, shares with him the labors of the alembic and the furnace, learns from him mystic knowledge, like that of which our first parents participated to the overthrow of their race, and requites it with lessons more dreadful than he receives, till the profane host has added to his hoard of unholy wisdom all that the pagan visitor can communicate. And these things are done in Almain, which is called the Holy Roman Empire, of which so many priests are princes! —they are done, and neither ban nor monition is issued against a race of sorcerers who, from age to age, go on triumphing in their necromancy.'

"Such arguments, which were echoed from mitered abbots to the cell of anchorites, seem, nevertheless, to have made little impression on the Imperial council. But they served to excite the zeal of many a baron and free count of the Empire, who were taught by them to esteem a war or feud with the Barons of Arnheim as partaking of the nature, and entitled to the immunities, of a crusade against the enemies of the Faith, and to regard an attack upon these obnoxious potentates as a mode of clearing off their deep scores with the Christian Church. But the Lords of Arnheim,

though not seeking for quarrel, were by no means unwarlike, or averse to maintaining their own defense. Some, on the contrary, belonging to this obnoxious race were not the less distinguished as gallant knights and good men-at-arms. They were besides wealthy, secured and strengthened by great alliances, and in an eminent degree wise and provident. This the parties who assailed them learned to their cost.

"The confederacies formed against the Lords of Arnheim were broken up; the attacks which their enemies meditated were anticipated and disconcerted; and those who employed actual violence were repelled with signal loss to the assailants; until at length an impression was produced in their neighborhood, that, by their accurate information concerning meditated violence, and their extraordinary powers of resisting and defeating it, the obnoxious barons must have brought to their defense means which merely human force was incapable of overthrowing; so that, becoming as much feared as hated, they were suffered for the last generation to remain unmolested. And this was rather the case that the numerous vassals of this great house were perfectly satisfied with their feudal superiors, abundantly ready to rise in their defense, and disposed to believe that, whether their lords were sorcerers or no, their own condition would not be mended by exchanging their government either for the rule of the crusaders in this holy warfare or that of the churchmen by whom it was instigated. The race of these barons ended in Herman von Arnheim, the maternal grandfather of Anne of Geierstein. He was buried with his helmet, sword, and shield, as is the German custom with the last male of a noble family.

"But he left an only daughter, Sybilla of Arnheim to inherit a considerable portion of his estate; and I never heard that the strong imputation of sorcery which attached to her house prevented numerous applications, from persons of the highest distinction in the Empire, to her legal guardian, the Emperor, for the rich heiress's hand in marriage. Albert of Geierstein, however, though an exile, obtained the preference. He was gallant and handsome, which recommended him to Sybilla; and the Emperor, bent at the time on the vain idea of recovering his authority in the Swiss mountains, was desirous to show himself generous to Albert, whom he considered as a fugitive from his country for espousing the Imperial cause. You may thus see, most noble King Arthur, that Anne of Geierstein, the only child of their marriage, descends from no ordinary stock; and that circumstances

in which she may be concerned are not to be explained or judged of so easily, or upon the same grounds of reasoning, as in the case of ordinary persons."

"By my honest word, Sir Rudolph of Donnerhugel," said Arthur, studiously laboring to keep a command upon his feelings, "I can see nothing in your narrative, and understand nothing from it, unless it be that, because in Germany, as in other countries, there have been fools who have annexed the idea of witchcraft and sorcery to the possession of knowledge and wisdom, you are therefore disposed to stigmatize a young maiden, who has always been respected and beloved by those around her, as a disciple of arts which, I trust, are as uncommon as unlawful."

Rudolph paused ere he replied.

"I could have wished," he said, "that you had been satisfied with the general character of Anne of Geierstein's maternal family, as offering some circumstances which may account for what you have, according to your own report, this night witnessed, and I am really unwilling to go into more particular details. To no one can Anne of Geierstein's fame be so dear as to me. I am, after her uncle's family, her nearest relative, and had she remained in Switzerland, or should she, as is most probable, return thither after the present visit to her father, perhaps our connection might be drawn yet closer. This has, indeed, only been prevented by certain prejudices of her uncle's respecting her father's authority, and the nearness of our relationship, which, however, comes within reach of a license very frequently obtained. But I only mention these things to show you how much more tender I must necessarily hold Anne of Geierstein's reputation than it is possible for you to do, being a stranger, known to her but a short while since, and soon to part with her, as I understand your purpose, forever."

The turn taken in this kind of apology irritated Arthur so highly, that it required all the reasons which recommended coolness to enable him to answer with assumed composure.

"I can have no ground, sir hauptman," he said, "to challenge any opinion which you may entertain of a young person with whom you are so closely connected as you appear to be with Anne of Geierstein. I only wonder that, with such regard for her as your relationship implies, you should be disposed to receive, on popular and trivial traditions, a belief which must injuriously affect your kinswoman, more especially one with whom you intimate a wish to form a still

more close connection. Bethink you, sir, that in all Christian lands the imputation of sorcery is the most foul which can be thrown on Christian man or woman."

"And I am so far from intimating such an imputation," said Rudolph, somewhat fiercely, "that, by the good sword I wear, he that dared give breath to such a thought against Anne of Geierstein must undergo my challenge, and take my life or lose his own. But the question is not whether the maiden herself practises sorcery, which he who avers had better get ready his tomb, and provide for his soul's safety; the doubt lies here, whether, as the descendant of a family whose relations with the unseen world are reported to have been of the closest degree, elfish and fantastical beings may not have power to imitate her form, and to present her appearance where she is not personally present; in fine, whether they have permission to play at her expense fantastical tricks, which they cannot exercise over other mortals, whose forefathers have ever regulated their lives by the rules of the church, and died in regular communion with it. And, as I sincerely desire to retain your esteem, I have no objection to communicate to you more particular circumstances respecting her genealogy, confirming the idea I have now expressed. But you will understand they are of the most private nature, and that I expect secrecy under the strictest personal penalty."

"I shall be silent, sir," replied the young Englishman, still struggling with suppressed passion, "on everything respecting the character of a maiden whom I am bound to respect so highly. But the fear of no man's displeasure can add a feather's weight to the guarantee of my own honor."

"Be it so," said Rudolph; "it is not my wish to awake angry feelings; but I am desirous, both for the sake of your good opinion, which I value, and also for the plainer explanation of what I have darkly intimated, to communicate to you what otherwise I would much rather have left untold."

"You must be guided by your own sense of what is necessary and proper in the case," answered Philipson; "but remember I press not on your confidence for the communication of anything that ought to remain secret, far less where that young lady is the subject."

Rudolph answered, after a minute's pause—"Thou hast seen and heard too much, Arthur, not to learn the whole, or least all that I know or apprehend on the mysterious subject. It is impossible but the circumstances must at times recur to your recollectiou, and I am desirous that you should

possess all the information necessary to understand them as clearly as the nature of the facts will permit. We have yet, keeping leftward to view the bog, upwards of a mile to make ere the circuit of the castle in accomplished. It will afford leisure enough for the tale I have to tell."

"Speak on—I listen!" answered the Englishman, divided between his desire to know all that it was possible to learn concerning Anne of Geierstein and his dislike to hear her name pronounced with such pretensions as those of Donnerhugel, together with the revival of his original prejudices against the gigantic Swiss, whose manners, always blunt, nearly to coarseness, seemed now marked by assumed superiority and presumption. Arthur listened, however, to his wild tale, and the interest which he took in it soon overpowered all other sensations.

CHAPTER XI

DONNERHUGEL'S NARRATIVE

> These be the adept's doctrines: every element
> Is peopled with its separate race of spirits.
> The airy Sylphs on the blue ether float;
> Deep in the earthy cavern skulks the Gnome;
> The sea-green Naiad skims the ocean-billow;
> And the fierce fire is yet a friendly home
> To its peculiar sprite, the Salamander.
>
> *Anonymous.*

I TOLD you (said Rudolph), that the Lords of Arnheim, though from father to son they were notoriously addicted to secret studies, were nevertheless, like the other German nobles, followers of war and the chase. This was peculiarly the case with Anne's maternal grandfather, Herman of Arnheim, who prided himself on possessing a splendid stud of horses, and one steed in particular, the noblest ever known in these circles of Germany, I should make wild work were I to attempt a description of such an animal, so I will content myself with saying his color was jet-black, without a hair of white either on his face or feet. For this reason, and the wildness of his disposition, his master had termed him Apollyon—a circumstance which was secretly considered as tending to sanction the evil reports which touched the house of Arnheim, being, it was said, the naming of a favorite animal after a foul fiend.

It chanced, one November day, that the baron had been hunting in the forest, and did not reach home till nightfall. There were no guests with him, for, as I hinted to you before, the castle of Arnheim seldom received any other than those from whom its inhabitants hoped to gain augmentation of knowledge. The baron was seated alone in his hall, illuminated with cressets and torches. His one hand held a volume covered with characters unintelligible to all save himself. The other rested on the marble table, on which was placed a flask of Tokay wine. A page stood in respectful attendance near the bottom of the large and dim apartment, and no sound was heard save that of the night wind,

when it sighed mournfully through the rusty coats of mail, and waved the tattered banners which were the tapestry of the feudal hall. At once the footstep of a person was heard ascending the stairs in haste and trepidation; the door of the hall was thrown violently open, and, terrified to a degree of ecstasy, Caspar, the head of the baron's stable, or his master of horse, stumbled up almost to the foot of the table at which his lord was seated, with the exclamation in his mouth—

"My lord—my lord, a fiend is in the stable!"

"What means this folly?" said the baron, arising, surprised and displeased at an interruption so unusual.

"Let me endure your displeasure," said Caspar, "if I speak not truth! Apollyon——" Here he paused.

"Speak out, thou frightened fool," said the baron; "is my horse sick, or injured?"

The master of the stalls again gasped forth the word "Apollyon!"

"Say on," said the baron; "were Apollyon in presence personally, it were nothing to shake a brave man's mind."

"The devil," answered the master of the horse, "is in Apollyon's stall!"

"Fool!" exclaimed the nobleman, snatching a torch from the wall; "what is it that could have turned thy brain in such silly fashion? Things like thee, that are born to serve us, should hold their brains on a firmer tenure, for our sakes, if not for that of their worthless selves."

As he spoke, he descended to the court of the castle, to visit the stately range of stables which occupied all the lower part of the quadrangle on one side. He entered, where fifty gallant steeds stood in rows on each side of the ample hall.

At the side of each stall hung the weapons of offense and defense of a man-at-arms, as bright as constant attention could make them, together with the buff-coat which formed the trooper's under garment. The baron, followed by one or two of the domestics, who had assembled full of astonishment at the unusual alarm, hastened up to the head of the stable, betwixt the rows of steeds. As he approached the stall of his favorite horse, which was the uppermost of the right-hand row, the gallant steed neither neighed, nor shook his head, nor stamped with his foot, nor gave the usual signs of joy at his lord's approach; a faint moaning, as if he implored assistance, was the only acknowledgement he gave of the baron's presence.

Sir Herman held up the torch, and discovered that there was indeed a tall dark figure standing in the stall, resting his

hand on the horse's shoulder. "Who art thou," said the baron, "and what dost thou here?"

"I seek refuge and hospitality," replied the stranger; "and I conjure thee to grant it me, by the shoulder of thy horse, and by the edge of thy sword, and so as they may never fail thee when thy need is at the utmost!"

"Thou art, then, a brother of the sacred fire," said baron Herman of Arnheim; "and I may not refuse thee the refuge which thou requirest of me, after the ritual of the Persian Magi. From whom, and for what length of time, doest thou crave my protection?"

"From those," replied the stranger, "who shall arrive in quest of me before the morning cock shall crow, and for the full space of a year and a day from this period."

"I may not refuse thee," said the baron, "consistently with my oath and my honor. For a year and a day I will be thy pledge, and thou shalt share with me roof and chamber, wine and food. But thou, too must obey the law of Zoroaster, which, as it says, 'Let the stronger protect the weaker brother,' says also, 'Let the wiser instruct the brother who hath less knowledge.' I am the stronger, and thou shalt be safe under my protection; but thou art the wiser, and must instruct me in the most secret mysteries."

"You mock your servant," said the strange visitor; "but, if aught is known to Dannischemend which can avail Herman, his instructions shall be of those of a father to a son."

"Come forth, then, from thy place of refuge," said the Baron of Arnheim. "I swear to thee by the sacred fire which lives without terrestrial fuel, and by the fraternity which is betwixt us, and by the shoulder of my horse, and the edge of my good sword, I will be thy warrant for a year and a day, if so far my power shall extend."

The stranger came forth accordingly; and those who saw the singularity of his appearance scarce wondered at the fears of Caspar, the stall-master, when he found such a person in the stable, by what mode of entrance he was unable to conceive. When he reached the lighted hall to which the baron conducted him, as he would have done a welcome and honored guest, the stranger appeared to be very tall, and of a dignified aspect. His dress was Asiatic, being a long black caftan, or gown, like that worn by Armenians, and a lofty square cap, covered with the wool of Astracan lambs. Every article of the dress was black, which gave relief to the long white beard that flowed down over his bosom. His gown was fastened by a sash of black silk net-work, in

which, instead of a poniard or sword, was stuck a silver case, containing writing-materials and a roll of parchment. The only ornament of his apparel consisted in a large ruby of uncommon brilliancy, which, when he approached the light, seemed to glow with such liveliness as if the gem itself had emitted the rays which it only reflected back. To the offer of refreshment, the stranger replied, "Bread I may not eat, water shall not moisten my lips, until the avenger shall have passed by the threshold."

The baron commanded the lamps to be trimmed and fresh torches to be lighted, and, sending his whole household to rest, remained seated in the hall along with the stranger, his suppliant. At the dead hour of midnight, the gates of the castle were shaken as by a whirlwind, and a voice, as of a herald, was heard to demand a herald's lawful prisoner, Dannischemend, the son of Hali. The warder then heard a lower window of the hall thrown open, and could distinguish his master's voice addressing the person who had thus summoned the castle. But the night was so dark that he might not see the speakers, and the language which they used was either entirely foreign or so largely interspersed with strange words that he could not understand a syllable which they said. Scarce five minutes had elapsed, when he who was without again elevated his voice as before, and said in German, "For a year and a day, then, I forbear my forfeiture; but coming for it when that time shall elapse, I come for my right, and will no longer be withstood."

From that period, Dannischemend, the Persian, was a constant guest at the castle of Arnheim, and, indeed, never for any visible purpose crossed the drawbridge. His amusements, or studies, seemed centered in the library of the castle, and in the laboratory, where the baron sometimes toiled in conjunction with him for many hours together. The inhabitants of the castle could find no fault in the Magus, or Persian, excepting his apparently dispensing with the ordinances of religion, since he neither went to mass nor confession, nor attended upon other religious ceremonies. The chaplain did indeed profess himself satisfied with the state of the stranger's conscience; but it had been long suspected that the worthy ecclesiastic held his easy office on the very reasonable condition of approving the principles and asserting the orthodoxy of all guests whom the baron invited to share his hospitality.

It was observed that Dannischemend was rigid in paying his devotions, by prostrating himself in the first rays of the rising sun, and that he constructed a silver lamp of the most

beautiful proportions, which he placed on a pedestal, representing a truncated column of marble, having its base sculptured with hieroglyphical imagery. With what essences he fed this flame was unknown to all, unless perhaps to the baron; but the flame was more steady, pure, and lustrous than any which was ever seen, excepting the sun of heaven itself, and it was generally believed that the Magian made it an object of worship in the absence of that blessed luminary. Nothing else was observed of him, unless that his morals seemed severe, his gravity extreme, his general mode of life very temperate, and his fasts and vigils of frequent recurrence. Except on particular occasions, he spoke to no one of the castle but the baron; but, as he had money and was liberal, he was regarded by the domestics with awe indeed, but without fear or dislike.

Winter was succeeded by spring, summer brought her flowers, and autumn her fruits, which ripened and were fading, when a foot-page, who sometimes attended them in the laboratory to render manual assistance when required, heard the Persian say to the Baron of Arnheim, "You will do well, my son, to mark my words; for my lessons to you are drawing to an end, and there is no power on earth which can longer postpone my fate."

"Alas, my master!" said the baron, "and must I then lose the benefit of your direction, just when your guiding hand becomes necessary to place me on the very pinnacle of the temple of wisdom?"

"Be not discouraged, my son," answered the sage. "I will bequeath the task of perfecting you in your studies to my daughter, who will come hither on purpose. But remember, if you value the permanence of your family, look not upon her as aught else than a helpmate in your studies; for if you forget the instructress in the beauty of the maiden, you will be buried with your sword and your shield, as the last male of your house; and farther evil, believe me, will arise, for such alliances never come to a happy issue, of which my own is an example. But hush, we are observed."

The household of the Castle of Arnheim, having but few things to interest them, were the more eager observers of those which came under their notice; and when the termination of the period when the Persian was to receive shelter in the castle began to approach, some of the inmates, under various pretexts, but which resolved into very terror, absconded, while others held themselves in expectation of some striking and terrible catastrophe. None such, however, took

place ; and, on the expected anniversary, long ere the witching hour of midnight, Dannischemend terminated his visit, in the Castle of Arnheim by riding away from the gate in the guise of an ordinary traveler. The baron had meantime taken leave of his tutor with many marks of regret, and some which amounted even to sorrow. The sage Persian comforted him by a long whisper of which the last part only was heard—"By the first beam of sunshine she will be with you. Be kind to her, but not over kind." He then departed, and was never again seen or heard of in the vicinity of Arnheim.

The baron was observed during all the day after the departure of the stranger to be particularly melancholy. He remained, contrary to his custom, in the great hall, and neither visited the library nor the laboratory, where he could no longer enjoy the company of his departed instructor. At dawn of the ensuing morning, Sir Herman summoned his page, and, contrary to his habits, which used to be rather careless in respect of apparel, he dressed himself with great accuracy ; and as he was in the prime of life, and of a noble figure, he had reason to be satisfied with his appearance. Having performed his toilet, he waited till the sun had just appeared above the horizon, and, taking from the table the key of the laboratory, which the page believed must have lain there all night, he walked thither, followed by his attendant. At the door the baron made a pause, and seemed at one time to doubt whether he should not send away the page, at another to hesitate whether he should open the door, as one might do who expected some strange sight within. He pulled up resolution, however, turned the key, threw the door open, and entered. The page followed close behind his master, and was astonished to the point of extreme terror at what he beheld, although the sight, however extraordinary, had in it nothing save what was agreeable and lovely.

The silver lamp was extinguished, or removed from its pedestal, where stood in place of it a most beautiful female figure in the Persian costume, in which the color of pink predominated. But she wore no turban or head-dress of any kind, saving a blue ribbon drawn through her auburn hair, and secured by a gold clasp, the outer side of which was ornamented by a superb opal, which, amid the changing lights peculiar to that gem, displayed internally a slight tinge of red like a spark of fire.

The figure of this young person was rather under the mid-

dle size, but perfectly well formed; the Eastern dress, with the wide trousers gathered round the ankles, made visible the smallest and most beautiful feet which had ever been seen, while hands and arms of the most perfect symmetry were partly seen from under the folds of the robe. The little lady's countenance was of a lively and expressive character, in which spirit and wit seemed to predominate; and the quick dark eye, with its beautifully formed eyebrow, seemed to presage the arch remark to which the rosy and half-smiling lip appeared ready to give utterance.

The pedestal on which she stood, or rather was perched, would have appeared unsafe had any figure heavier than her own been placed there. But, however she had been transported thither, she seemed to rest on it as lightly and safely as a linnet when it has dropped from the sky on the tendril of a rosebud. The first beam of the rising sun, falling through a window directly opposite to the pedestal, increased the effect of this beautiful figure, which remained as motionless as if it had been carved in marble. She only expressed her sense of the Baron of Arnheim's presence by something of a quicker respiration, and a deep blush, accompanied by a slight smile,

Whatever reason the Baron of Arnheim might have for expecting to see some such object as now exhibited its actual presence, the degree of beauty which it presented was so much beyond his expectation, that for an instant he stood without breath or motion. At once, however, he seemed to recollect that it was his duty to welcome the fair stranger to his castle, and to relieve her from her precarious situation. He stepped forward accordingly with the words of welcome on his tongue, and was extending his arms to lift her from the pedestal, which was nearly six feet high; but the light and active stranger merely accepted the support of his hand, and descended on the floor as light and as safe as if she had been formed of gossamer. It was indeed only by the momentary pressure of her little hand that the Baron of Arnheim was finally made sensible that he had to do with a being of flesh and blood.

"I am come as I have been commanded," she said, looking around her. "You must expect a strict and diligent mistress, and I hope for the credit of an attentive pupil."

After the arrival of this singular and interesting being in the castle of Arnheim, various alterations took place within the interior of the household. A lady of high rank and small fortune, the respectable widow of a count of the Empire,

who was the baron's blood relation, received and accepted an invitation to preside over her kinsman's domestic affairs, and remove, by her countenance, any suspicions which might arise from the presence of Hermione, as the beautiful Persian was generally called.

The Countess Waldstetten carried her complaisance so far as to be present on almost all occasions, whether in the laboratory or library, when the Baron of Arnheim received lessons from or pursued studies with the young and lovely tutor who had been thus strangely substituted for the aged Magus. If this lady's report was to be trusted, their pursuits were of a most extraordinary nature, and the results which she sometimes witnessed were such as to create fear as well as surprise. But she strongly vindicated them from practising unlawful arts or overstepping the boundaries of natural science.

A better judge of such matters, the Bishop of Bamberg himself, made a visit to Arnheim, on purpose to witness the wisdom of which so much was reported through the whole Rhine country. He conversed with Hermione, and found her deeply impressed with the truths of religion, and so perfectly acquainted with its doctrines, that he compared her to a doctor of theology in the dress of an Eastern dancing-girl. When asked regarding her knowledge of languages and science, he answered, that he had been attracted to Arnheim by the most extravagant reports on these points, but that he must return confessing "that half thereof had not been told unto him."

In consequence of this indisputable testimony, the sinister reports which had been occasioned by the singular appearance of the fair stranger were in a great measure lulled to sleep, especially as her amiable manners won the involuntary goodwill of every one that approached her.

Meantime a marked alteration began to take place in the interviews between the lovely tutor and her pupil. These were conducted with the same caution as before, and never, so far as could be observed, took place without the presence of the Countess of Waldstetten or some other third person of respectability. But the scenes of these meetings were no longer the scholar's library or the chemist's laboratory: the gardens, the groves were resorted to for amusement, and parties of hunting and fishing, with evenings spent in the dance, seemed to announce that the studies of wisdom were for a time abandoned for the pursuits of pleasure. It was not difficult to guess the meaning of this: the Baron of Arn-

heim and his fair guest, speaking a language different from all others, could enjoy their private conversation even amid all the tumult of gaiety around them ; and no one was surprised to hear it formally announced, after a few weeks of gaiety, that the fair Persian was to be wedded to the Baron of Arnheim.

The manners of this fascinating young person were so pleasing, her conversation so animated, her wit so keen, yet so well tempered with good-nature and modesty, that, notwithstanding her unknown origin, her high fortune attracted less envy than might have been expected in a case so singular. Above all, her generosity amazed and won the hearts of all the young persons who approached her. Her wealth seemed to be measureless, for the many rich jewels which she distributed among her fair friends would otherwise have left her without ornaments for herself. These good qualities, her liberality above all, together with a simplicity of thought and character which formed a beautiful contrast to the depth of acquired knowledge which she was well known to possess—these, and her total want of ostentation, made her superiority be pardoned among her companions. Still there was notice taken of some peculiarities, exaggerated perhaps by envy, which seemed to draw a mystical distinction between the beautiful Hermione and the mere mortals with whom she lived and conversed.

In the merry dance she was so unrivaled in lightness and agility, that her performance seemed that of an aerial being. She could, without suffering from her exertion, continue the pleasure till she had tired out the most active revelers ; and even the young Duke of Hochspringen, who was reckoned the most indefatigable at the exercise in Germany, having been her partner for half an hour, was compelled to break off the dance, and throw himself, totally exhausted, on a couch, claiming, he had been dancing not with a woman, but with an *ignus fatuus.*

Other whispers averred that, while she played with her young companions in the labyrinth and mazes of the castle gardens at hide-and-seek, or similar games of activity, she became animated with the same supernatural alertness which was supposed to inspire her in the dance. She appeared amongst her companions and vanished from them with a degree of rapidity which was inconceivable ; and hedges, treillage, or such-like obstructions were surmounted by her in a manner which the most vigilant eye could not detect ; for, after being observed on the side of the barrier at one

instant, in another she was beheld close beside the spectator.

In such moments, when her eyes sparkled, her cheeks reddened, and her whole frame became animated, it was pretended that the opal clasp amid her tresses, the ornament which she never laid aside, shot forth the little spark, or tongue of flame, which it always displayed, with an increased vivacity. In the same manner, if in the half-darkened hall the conversation of Hermione became unusually animated, it was believed that the jewel became brilliant, and even displayed a twinkling and flashing gleam which seemed to be emitted by the gem itself, and not produced in the usual manner, by the reflection of some external light. Her maidens were also heard to surmise that, when their mistress was agitated by any hasty or brief resentment (the only weakness of temper which she was sometimes observed to display), they could observe dark-red sparks flash from the mystic brooch, as if it sympathized with the wearer's emotions. The women who attended on her toilet farther reported that this gem was never removed but for a few minutes, when the baroness's hair was combed out; that she was unusually pensive and silent during the time it was laid aside, and particularly apprehensive when any liquid was brought near it. Even in the use of holy water at the door of the church, she was observed to omit the sign of the cross on the forehead, for fear, it was supposed, of the water touching the valued jewel.

These singular reports did not prevent the marriage of the Baron of Arnheim from proceeding as had been arranged. It was celebrated in the usual form, and with the utmost splendor, and the young couple seemed to commence a life of happiness rarely to be found on earth. In the course of twelve months, the lovely baroness presented her husband with a daughter, which was to be christened Sybilla, after the count's mother. As the health of the child was excellent, the ceremony was postponed till the recovery of the mother from her confinement; many were invited to be present on the occasion, and the castle was thronged with company.

It happened, that amongst the guests was an old lady, notorious for playing in private society the part of a malicious fairy in a minstrel's tale. This was the Baroness of Steinfeldt, famous in the neighborhood for her insatiable curiosity and overweening pride. She had not been many days in the castle ere, by the aid of a female attendant, who

acted as an intelligencer, she had made herself mistress of all that was heard, said, or suspected concerning the peculiarities of the Baroness Hermione. It was on the morning of the day appointed for the christening, while the whole company were assembled in the hall, and waiting till the baroness should appear, to pass with them to the chapel, that there arose between the censorious and haughty dame whom we have just mentioned and the Countess Waldstetten a violent discussion concerning some point of disputed precedence. It was referred to the Baron von Arnheim, who decided in favor of the countess. Madame de Steinfeldt instantly ordered her palfrey to be prepared, and her attendants to mount.

"I leave this place," she said, "which a good Christian ought never to have entered—I leave a house of which the master is a sorcerer, the mistress a demon who dares not cross her brow with holy water, and their trencher companion one who for a wretched pittance is willing to act as match-maker between a wizard and an incarnate fiend."

She then departed with rage in her countenance and spite in her heart.

The Baron of Arnheim then stepped forward, and demanded of the knights and gentlemen around if there were any among them who would dare to make good with his sword the infamous falsehoods thrown upon himself, his spouse, and his kinswoman.

There was a general answer, utterly refusing to defend the Baroness of Steinfeldt's words in so bad a cause, and universally testifying the belief of the company that she spoke in the spirit of calumny and falsehood.

"Then let that lie fall to the ground which no man of courage will hold up," said the Baron of Arnheim; "only, all who are here this morning shall be satisfied whether the Baroness Hermione doth or doth not share the rites of Christianity."

The Countess of Waldstetten made anxious signs to him while he spoke thus; and when the crowd permitted her to approach near him, she was heard to whisper, "O, be not rash; try no experiment. There is something mysterious about that opal talisman; be prudent, and let the matter pass by."

The baron, who was in a more towering passion than well became the wisdom to which he made pretense—although it will be perhaps allowed that an affront so public, and in such a time and place, was enough to shake the prudence of

the most staid, and the philosophy of the most wise—answered sternly and briefly, "Are you, too, such a fool?" and retained his purpose.

The Baroness of Arnheim at this moment entered the hall, looking just so pale from her late confinement as to render her lovely countenance more interesting, if less animated, than usual. Having paid her compliments to the assembled company, with the most graceful and condescending attention, she was beginning to inquire why Madame de Steinfeldt was not present, when her husband made the signal for the company to move forward to the chapel, and lent the baroness his arm to bring up the rear. The chapel was nearly filled by the splendid company, and all eyes were bent on their host and hostess, as they entered the place of devotion immediately after four young ladies, who supported the infant babe in a light and beautiful litter.

As they passed the threshold, the baron dipt his finger in the font-stone, and offered holy water to his lady, who accepted it, as usual, by touching his finger with her own. But then, as if to confute the calumnies of the malevolent lady of Steinfeldt, with an air of sportive familiarity which was rather unwarranted by the time and place, he flirted on her beautiful forehead a drop or two of the moisture which remained on his own hand. The opal, on which one of these drops had lighted, shot out a brilliant spark like a falling star, and became the instant afterwards lightless and colorless as a common pebble, while the beautiful baroness sunk on the floor of the chapel with a deep sigh of pain. All crowded around her in dismay. The unfortunate Hermione was raised from the ground, and conveyed to her chamber; and so much did her countenance and pulse alter, within the short time necessary to do this, that those who looked upon her pronounced her a dying woman. She was no sooner in her own apartment than she requested to be left alone with her husband. He remained an hour in the room, and when he came out he locked and double locked the door behind him. He then betook himself to the chapel, and remained there for an hour or more, prostrated before the altar.

In the mean time, most of the guests had dispersed in dismay; though some abode out of courtesy or curiosity. There was a general sense of impropriety in suffering the door of the sick lady's apartment to remain locked; but, alarmed at the whole circumstances of her illness, it was some time ere any one dared disturb the devotions of the baron. At length medical aid arrived, and the Countess of Waldstetten took

upon her to demand the key. She spoke more than once to a man who seemed incapable of hearing, at least of understanding, what she said. At length he gave her the key, and added sternly, as he did so, that all aid was unavailing, and that it was his pleasure that all strangers should leave the castle. There were few who inclined to stay, when, upon opening the door of the chamber in which the baroness had been deposited little more than two hours before, no traces of her could be discovered, unless that there was about a handful of light gray ashes, like such as might have been produced by burning fine paper, found on the bed where she had been laid. A solemn funeral was nevertheless performed, with masses and all other spiritual rites, for the soul of the high and noble Lady Hermione of Arnheim; and it was exactly on that same day three years that the baron himself was laid in the grave of the same chapel of Arnheim, with swords, shield, and helmet, as the last male of his family.

Here the Swiss paused, for they were approaching the bridge of the castle of Graffslust.

CHAPTER XII

Believe me, sir,
It carries a rare form ; but 'tis a spirit.
The Tempest.

THERE was a short silence after the Bernese had concluded his singular tale. Arthur Philipson's attention had been gradually and intensely attracted by a story which was too much in unison with the received ideas of the age to be encountered by the unhesitating incredulity with which it must have been heard in later and more enlightened times.

He was also considerably struck by the manner in which it had been told by the narrator, whom he had hitherto only regarded in the light of a rude huntsman or soldier ; whereas he now allowed Donnerhugel credit for a more extensive acquaintance with the general manners of the world than he had previously anticipated. The Swiss rose in his opinion as a man of talent, but without making the slightest progress in his affections. "The swashbuckler," he said to himself, "has brains, as well as brawn and bones, and is fitter for the office of commanding others than I formerly thought him." Then, turning to his companion, he thanked him for the tale, which had shortened the way in so interesting a manner.

"And it is from this singular marriage," he continued, "that Anne of Geierstein derives her origin ?"

"Her mother," answered the Swiss, "was Sybilla of Arnheim, the infant at whose christening the mother died, disappeared, or whatever you may list to call it. The barony of Arnheim, being a male fief, reverted to the Emperor. The castle has never been inhabited since the death of the last lord ; and has, as I have heard, become in some sort ruinous. The occupations of its ancient proprietors, and, above all, the catastrophe of its last inhabitant, have been thought to render it no eligible place of residence."

"Did there appear anything preternatural," said the Englishman, "about the young baroness, who married the brother of the Landamman ?"

"So far as I have heard," replied Rudolph, "there were strange stories. It was said that the nurses, at the dead of night, have seen Hermione, the last Baroness of Arnheim, stand weeping by the side of the child's cradle, and other things to the same purpose. But here I speak from less correct information than that from which I drew my former narrative."

"And since the credibility of a story, not very probable in itself, must needs be granted or withheld according to the evidence on which it is given, may I ask you," said Arthur, "to tell me what is the authority on which you have so much reliance?"

"Willingly," answered the Swiss. "Know that Theodore Donnerhugel, the favorite page of the last Baron of Arnheim, was my father's brother. Upon his master's death, he retired to his native town of Berne, and most of his time was employed in training me up to arms and martial exercises, as well according to the fashion of Germany as of Switzerland, for he was master of all. He witnessed with his own eyes, and heard with his own ears, great part of the melancholy and mysterious events which I have detailed to you. Should you ever visit Berne, you may see the good old man."

"You think, then," said Arthur, "that the appearance which I have this night seen is connected with the mysterious marriage of Anne of Geierstein's grandfather?"

"Nay," replied Rudolph, "think not that I can lay down any positive explanation of a thing so strange. I can only say that, unless I did you the injustice to disbelieve your testimony respecting the apparition of this evening, I know no way to account for it, except by remembering that there is a portion of the young lady's blood which is thought not to be derived from the race of Adam, but more or less directly from one of those elementary spirits which have been talked of both in ancient and modern times. But I may be mistaken. We will see how she bears herself in the morning, and whether she carries in her looks the weariness and paleness of a midnight watcher. If she doth not, we may be authorized in thinking either that your eyes have strangely deceived you or that they have been cheated by some spectral appearance which is not of this world."

To this the young Englishman attempted no reply, nor was there time for any; for they were immediately afterwards challenged by the sentinel from the drawbridge.

The question "Who goes there?" was twice satisfactorily

answered before Sigismund would admit the patrol to cross the drawbridge.

"Ass and mule that thou art," said Rudolph, "what was the meaning of thy delay?"

"Ass and mule thyself, hauptman!" said the Swiss, in answer to this objurgation. "I have been surprised by a goblin on my post once to-night already, and I have got so much experience upon that matter, that I will not easily be caught a second time."

"What goblin, thou fool," said Donnerhugel, "would be idle enough to play his gambols at the expense of so very poor an animal as thou art?"

"Thou art as cross as my father, hauptman," replied Sigismund, "who cries fool and blockhead at every word I speak; and yet I have lips, teeth, and tongue to speak with, just like other folk."

"We will not contest the matter, Sigismund," said Rudolph. "It is clear that, if thou dost differ from other people, it is in a particular which thou canst be hardly expected to find out or acknowledge. But what, in the name of simplicity, is it which hath alarmed thee on thy post?"

"Marry, thus it was, hauptman," returned Sigismund Biederman. "I was something tired, you see, with looking up at the broad moon, and thinking what in the universe it could be made of, and how we came to see it just as well here as at home, this place being so many miles from Geierstein. I was tired, I say, of this and other perplexing thoughts, so I drew my fur cap down over my ears, for I promise you the wind blew shrill; and then I planted myself firm on my feet, with one of my legs a little advanced, and both my hands resting on my partizan, which I placed upright before me to rest upon; and so I shut mine eyes."

"Shut thine eyes, Sigismund, and thou upon thy watch!" exclaimed Donnerhugel.

"Care not thou for that," answered Sigismund, "I kept my ears open. And yet it was to little purpose, for something came upon the bridge with a step as stealthy as that of a mouse. I looked up with a start at the moment it was opposite to me, and when I looked up—whom think you I saw?"

"Some fool like thyself," said Rudolph, at the same time pressing Philipson's foot to make him attend to the answer—a hint which was little necessary, since he waited for it in the utmost agitation. Out it came at last.

"By St. Mark, it was our own Anne of Geierstein!"

"It is impossible," replied the Bernese.

"I should have said so too," quoth Sigismund, "for I had peeped into her bedroom before she went thither, and it was so bedizened that a queen or a princess might have slept in it; and why should the wench get out of her good quarters, with all her friends about her to guard her, and go out to wander in the forest?"

"Maybe," said Rudolph, "she only looked from the bridge to see how the night waned."

"No," said Sigismund; "she was returning from the forest. I saw her when she reached the end of the bridge, and thought of striking at her, conceiving it to be the devil in her likeness. But I remembered my halberd is no birch switch to chastise boys and girls with; and had I done Anne any harm, you would all have been angry with me, and, to speak truth, I should have been ill pleased with myself; for although she doth make a jest of me now and then, yet it were a dull house ours were we to lose Anne."

"Ass," answered the Bernese, "didst thou speak to this form, or goblin as you call it?"

"Indeed I did not, Captain Wiseacre. My father is ever angry with me when I speak without thinking, and I could not at that particular moment think on anything to the purpose. Neither was there time to think, for she passed me like a snowflake upon a whirlwind. I marched into the castle after her, however, calling on her by name; so the sleepers were awakened, and men flew to their arms, and there was as much confusion as if Archibald of Hagenbach had been among us with sword and pike. And who should come out of her little bedroom, as much startled and as much in a bustle as any of us, but Mrs. Anne herself! And as she protested she had never left her room that night, why I, Sigismund Biederman, was made to stand the whole blame, as if I could prevent people's ghosts from walking. But I told her my mind when I saw them all so set against me. 'And, Mistress Anne,' quoth I, 'it's well known the kindred you come of; and, after this fair notice, if you send any of your double-gangers* to me, let them put iron skull-caps on their heads, for I will give them the length and weight of a Swiss halberd, come in what shape they list.' However, they all cried 'Shame on me!' and my father drove me out again, with as little remorse as if I had been the old house-dog, which had stolen in from his watch to the fireside."

The Bernese replied, with an air of coldness approaching

* See Note 1.

to contempt, "You have slept on your watch, Sigismund, a high military offense, and you have dreamed while you slept. You were in good luck that the Landamman did not suspect your negligence, or, instead of being sent back to your duty like a lazy watch-dog, you might have been scourged back like a faithless one to your kennel at Geierstein, as chanced to poor Ernest for a less matter."

"Ernest has not yet gone back though," said Sigismund, "and I think he may pass as far into Burgundy as we shall do in this journey. I pray you, however, hauptman, to treat me not dog-like, but as a man, and send some one to relieve me, instead of prating here in the cold night air. If there be anything to do to-morrow, as I well guess there may, a mouthful of food and a minute of sleep will be but a fitting preparative, and I have stood watch here these two mortal hours."

With that the young giant yawned portentously, as if to enforce the reasons of his appeal.

"A mouthful and a minute!" said Rudolph—"a roasted ox and a lethargy like that of the Seven Sleepers would scarce restore you to the use of your refreshed and waking senses. But I am your friend, Sigismund, and you are secure in my favorable report; you shall be instantly relieved, that you may sleep, if it be possible, without disturbances from dreams. Pass on, young men (addressing the others, who by this time had come up), and go to your rest; Arthur of England and I will report to the Landamman and the banneret the account of our patrol."

The patrol accordingly entered the castle, and were soon heard joining their slumbering companions. Rudolph Donnerhugel seized Arthur's arm, and, while they went towards the hall, whispered in his ear—

"These are strange passages! How think you we should report them to the deputation?"

"That I must refer to yourself," said Arthur: "you are the captain of our watch. I have done my duty in telling you what I saw—or thought I saw; it is for you to judge how far it is fitting to communicate it to the Landamman; only, as it concerns the honor of his family, to his ear alone I think it should be confided."

"I see no occasion for that," said the Bernese, hastily; "it cannot affect or interest our general safety. But I may take occasion hereafter to speak with Anne on this subject."

This latter hint gave as much pain to Arthur as the general proposal of silence on an affair so delicate had afforded

him satisfaction. But his uneasiness was of a kind which he felt it necessary to suppress, and he therefore replied with as much composure as he could assume—

"You will act, sir hauptman, as your sense of duty and delicacy shall dictate. For me, I shall be silent on what you call the strange passages of the night, rendered doubly wonderful by the report of Sigismund Biederman."

"And also on what you have seen and heard concerning our auxiliaries of Berne?" said Rudolph.

"On that I shall certainly be silent," said Arthur; "unless thus far, that I mean to communicate to my father the risk of his baggage being liable to examination and seizure at La Ferette."

"It is needless," said Rudolph; "I will answer with head and hand for the safety of everything belonging to him."

"I thank you in his name," said Arthur; "but we are peaceful travelers, to whom it must be much more desirable to avoid a broil than to give occasion for one, even when secure of coming out of it triumphantly."

"These are the sentiments of a merchant, but not of a soldier," said Rudolph, in a cold and displeased tone; "but the matter is your own, and you must act in it as you think best. Only remember, if you go to La Ferette without our assistance, you hazard both goods and life."

They entered, as he spoke, the apartment of their fellow-travelers. The companions of their patrol had already laid themselves down amongst their sleeping comrades at the lower end of the room. The Landamman and the bannerman of Berne heard Donnerhugel make a report that his patrol, both before and after midnight, had been made in safety, and without any encounter which expressed either danger or suspicion. The Bernese then wrapped him in his cloak, and, lying down on the straw, with that happy indifference to accommodation, and promptitude to seize the moment of repose, which is acquired by a life of vigilance and hardship, was in a few minutes fast asleep.

Arthur remained on foot but a little longer, to dart an earnest look on the door of Anne of Geierstein's apartment, and to reflect on the wonderful occurrences of the evening. But they formed a chaotic mystery, for which he could see no clue, and the necessity of holding instant communication with his father compelled him forcibly to turn his thoughts in that direction. He was obliged to observe caution and secrecy in accomplishing his purpose. For this he laid himself down beside his parent, whose couch, with the hospi-

tality which he had experienced from the beginning of his intercourse with the kind-hearted Swiss, had been arranged in what was thought the most convenient place of the apartment, and somewhat apart from all others. He slept sound, but awoke at the touch of his son, who whispered to him in English, for the greater precaution, that he had important tidings for his private ear.

"An attack on our post?" said the elder Philipson; "must we take to our weapons?"

"Not now," said Arthur; "and I pray of you not to rise or make alarm—this matter concerns us alone."

"Tell it instantly, my son," replied his father; "you speak to one too much used to danger to be startled at it."

"It is a case for your wisdom to consider," said Arthur. "I had information, while upon the patrol, that the governor of La Ferette will unquestionably seize upon your baggage and merchandise, under pretext of levying dues claimed by the Duke of Burgundy. I have also been informed that our escort of Swiss youth are determined to resist this exaction, and conceive themselves possessed of the numbers and means sufficient to do so successfully."

"By St. George, that must not be!" said the elder Philipson; "it would be an evil requital to the true-hearted Landamman to give the fiery Duke a pretext for that war which the excellent old man is so anxiously desirous to avoid, if it be possible. Any exactions, however unreasonable, I will gladly pay, But to have my papers seized on were utter ruin. I partly feared this, and it made me unwilling to join myself to the Landamman's party. We must now break off from it. This rapacious governor will not surely lay hands on the deputation, which seeks his master's court under protection of the law of nations; but I can easily see how he might make our presence with them a pretext for quarrel, which will equally suit his own avaricious spirit and the humor of these fiery young men, who are seeking for matter of offense. This shall not be taken for our sake. We will separate ourselves from the deputies, and remain behind till they are passed on. If this De Hagenbach be not the most unreasonable of men, I will find a way to content him so far as we are individually concerned. Meanwhile, I will instantly wake the Landamman," he said, "and acquaint him with our purpose."

This was immediately done, for Philipson was not slow in the execution of his resolutions. In a minute he was stand-

ing by the side of Arnold Biederman, who, raised on his elbow, was listening to his communication, while over the shoulder of the Landamman rose the head and long beard of the deputy from Schwytz, his large clear blue eyes gleaming from beneath a fur cap, bent on the Englishman's face, but stealing a glance aside now and then to mark the impression which what was said made upon his colleague.

"Good friend and host," said the elder Philipson, "we have heard for a certainty that our poor merchandise will be subjected to taxation or seizure on our passage through La Ferette, and I would gladly avoid all cause of quarrel, for your sake as well as our own."

"You do not doubt that we can and will protect you?" replied the Landamman. "I tell you, Englishman, that the guest of a Swiss is as safe by his side as an eaglet under the wing of its dam; and to leave us because danger approaches is but a poor compliment to our courage or constancy. I am desirous of peace; but not the Duke of Burgundy himself should wrong a guest of mine, so far as my power might prevent it."

At this the deputy from Schwytz clenched a fist like a bull's knuckles, and showed it above the shoulders of his friend.

"It is even to avoid this, my worthy host," replied Philipson, "that I intend to separate from your friendly company sooner than I desire or purposed. Bethink you, my brave and worthy host, you are an ambassador seeking a national peace, I a trader seeking private gain. War, or quarrels which may cause war, are alike ruinous to your purpose and mine. I confess to you frankly that I am willing and able to pay a large ransom, and when you are departed I will negotiate for the amount. I will abide in the town of Bâle till I have made fair terms with Archibald de Hagenbach; and even if he is the avaricious extortioner you describe him, he will be somewhat moderate with me rather than run the risk of losing his booty entirely, by my turning back or taking another route."

"You speak wisely, sir Englishman," said the Landamman; "and I thank you for recalling my duty to my remembrance. But you must not, nevertheless, be exposed to danger. So soon as we move forward, the country will be again open to the devastations of the Burgundian riders and lanzknechts, who will sweep the roads in every direction. The people of Bâle are unhappily too timorous to protect you: they would yield you up upon the governor's first hint;

and for justice or lenity, you might as well expect it in Hell as from Hagenbach."

"There are conjurations, it is said, that can make Hell itself tremble," said Philipson; "and I have means to propitiate even this De Hagenbach, providing I can get to private speech with him. But I own I can expect nothing from his wild riders but to be put to death for the value of my cloak."

"If that be the case," said the Landamman, "and if you must needs separate from us, for which I deny not that you have alleged wise and worthy reasons, wherefore should you not leave Graffslust two hours before us? The roads will be safe, as our escort is expected; and you will probably, if you travel early, find De Hagenbach sober, and as capable as he ever is of hearing reason—that is, of perceiving his own interest. But, after his breakfast is washed down with Rhine *wein*, which he drinks every morning before he hears mass, his fury blinds even his avarice."

"All I want, in order to execute this scheme," said Philipson, "is the loan of a mule to carry my valise, which is packed up with your baggage."

"Take the she-mule," said the Landamman; "she belongs to my brother here from Schwytz: he will gladly bestow her on thee."

"If she were worth twenty crowns, and my comrade Arnold desired me to do so," said the old whitebeard.

"I will accept her as a loan with gratitude," said the Englishman. "But how can you dispense with the use of the creature? You have only one left."

"We can easily supply our want from Bâle," said the Landamman. "Nay, we can make this little delay serve your purpose, sir Englishman. I named for our time of departure the first hour after daybreak; we well postpone it to the second hour, which will give us enough of time to get a horse or mule, and you, sir Philipson, space to reach La Ferette, where I trust you will have achieved your business with De Hagenbach to your contentment, and will join company again with us as we travel through Burgundy."

"If our mutual objects will permit our traveling together, worthy Landamman," answered the merchant, "I shall esteem myself most happy in becoming the partner of your journey. And now resume the repose which I have interrupted."

"God bless you, wise and true-hearted man," said the Landamman, rising and embracing the Englishman.

"Should we never meet again, I will still remember the merchant who neglected thoughts of gain that he might keep the path of wisdom and rectitude. I know not another who would not have risked the shedding a lake of blood to save five ounces of gold. Farewell thou too, gallant young man. Thou hast learned among us to keep thy foot firm while on the edge of a Helvetian crag, but none can teach thee so well as thy father to keep an upright path among the morasses and precipices of human life."

He then embraced and took a kind farewell of his friends, in which, as usual, he was imitated by his friend of Schwytz, who swept with his long beard the right and left cheeks of both the Englishmen, and again made them heartily welcome to the use of his mule. All then once more composed themselves to rest for the space which remained before the appearance of the autumnal dawn.

CHAPTER XIII

The enmity and discord, which of late
Sprung from the rancorous outrage of your duke
To merchants, our well-dealing countrymen,
Who, wanting gilders to redeem their lives,
Have seal'd his rigorous statutes with their blood,
Excludes all pity from our threat'ning looks.
Comedy of Errors.

THE dawn had scarce begun to touch the distant horizon when Arthur Philipson was on foot to prepare for his father's departure and his own, which, as arranged on the preceding night, was to take place two hours before the Landamman and his attendants proposed to leave the ruinous castle of Graffslust. It was no difficult matter for him to separate the neatly arranged packages which contained his father's effects from the clumsy bundles in which the baggage of the Swiss was deposited. The one set of mails was made up with the neatness of men accustomed to long and perilous journeys; the other, with the rude carelessness of those who rarely left their home, and who were altogether inexperienced.

A servant of the Landamman assisted Arthur in his task, and in placing his father's baggage on the mule belonging to the bearded deputy from Schwytz. From this man also he received instructions concerning the road from Graffslust to Brisach (the chief citadel of La Ferette), which was too plain and direct to render it likely that they should incur any risk of losing their way, as had befallen them when traveling on the Swiss mountains. Everything being now prepared for their departure, the young Englishman awakened his father and acquainted him that all was ready. He then retired towards the chimney, while his father, according to his daily custom, repeated the prayer of St. Julian, the patron of travelers, and adjusted his dress for the journey,

It will not be wondered at that, while the father went through his devotions and equipped himself for travel, Arthur, with his heart full with what he had seen of Anne of Geierstein for some time before, and his brain dizzy with the recollection of the incidents of the preceding night, should have kept his eyes riveted on the door of the sleeping-apart-

ment at which he had last seen that young person disappear; that is, unless the pale and seemingly fantastic form which had twice crossed him so strangely should prove no wandering spirit of the elements, but the living substance of the person whose appearance it bore. So eager was his curiosity on this subject, that he strained his eyes to the utmost, as if it had been possible for them to have penetrated through wood and walls into the chamber of the slumbering maiden, in order to discover whether her eye or cheek bore any mark that she had last night been a watcher or a wanderer.

"But that was the proof to which Rudolph appealed," he said, internally, "and Rudolph alone will have the opportunity of remarking the result. Who knows what advantage my communication may give him in his suit with yonder lovely creature? And what must she think of me, save as one light of thought and loose of tongue, to whom nothing extraordinary can chance but he must hasten to babble it into the ears of those who are nearest to him at the moment? I would my tongue had been palsied ere I said a syllable to yonder proud, yet wily, prize-fighter! I shall never see her more, that is to be counted for certain. I shall never know the true interpretation of those mysteries which hang around her. But to think I may have prated something tending to throw her into the power of yonder ferocious boor will be a subject of remorse to me while I live."

Here he was startled out of his reverie by the voice of his father. "Why, how now, boy; art thou waking, Arthur, or sleeping on thy feet from the fatigue of last night's service?"

"Not so, my father," answered Arthur, at once recollecting himself. "Somewhat drowsy, perhaps; but the fresh morning air will soon put that to flight."

Walking with precaution through the group of sleepers who lay around, the elder Philipson, when they had gained the door of the apartment, turned back, and, looking on the straw couch which the large form of the Landamman, and the silvery beard of his constant companion, touched by the earliest beams of light, distinguished as that of Arnold Biederman, he muttered between his lips an involuntary adieu.

"Farewell, mirror of ancient faith and integrity—farewell, noble Arnold—farewell, soul of truth and candor, to whom cowardice, selfishness, and falsehood are alike unknown!"

"And farewell," thought his son, "to the loveliest and most candid, yet most mysterious, of maidens!" But the

adieu, as may well be believed, was not, like that of his father, expressed in words.

They were soon after on the outside of the gate. The Swiss domestic was liberally recompensed, and charged with a thousand kind words of farewell and of remembrance to the Landamman from his English guests, mingled with hopes and wishes that they might soon meet again in the Burgundian territory. The young man then took the bridle of the mule, and led the animal forward on their journey at an easy pace, his father walking by his side.

After a silence of some minutes, the elder Philipson addressed Arthur. "I fear me," he said, "we shall see the worth Landamman no more. The youths who attend him are bent upon taking offense; the Duke of Burgundy will not fail, I fear, to give them ample occasion; and the peace which the excellent man desires for the land of his fathers will be shipwrecked ere they reach the Duke's presence; though, even were it otherwise, how the proudest prince in Europe will brook the moody looks of burgesses and peasants—so will Charles of Burgundy term the friends we have parted from—is a question too easily answered. A war, fatal to the interests of all concerned, save Louis of France, will certainly take place; and dreadful must be the contest if the ranks of the Burgundian chivalry shall encounter those iron sons of the mountains, before whom so many of the Austrian nobility have been repeatedly prostrated."

"I am so much convinced of the truth of what you say, my father," replied Arthur, "that I judge even this day will not pass over without a breach of truce. I have already put on my shirt of mail, in case we should meet bad company betwixt Graffslust and Brisach; and I would to Heaven that you would observe the same precaution. It will not delay our journey; and I confess to you that I, at least, will travel with much greater consciousness of safety should you do so."

"I understand you, my son," replied the elder Philipson. "But I am a peaceful traveler in the Duke of Burgundy's territories, and must not willingly suppose that, while under the shadow of his banner, I must guard myself against banditti, as if I were in the wilds of Palestine. As for the authority of his officers, and the extent of their exactions, I need not tell you that they are, in our circumstances, things to be submitted to without grief or grudging."

Leaving the two travelers to journey towards Brisach at their leisure, I must transport my readers to the eastern gate of that small town, which, situated on an eminence, had a

commanding prospect on every side, but especially towards Bâle. It did not properly make a part of the dominions of the Duke of Burgundy, but had been placed in his hands in pawn, or in pledge, for the repayment of a considerable sum of money, due to Charles by the Emperor Sigismund of Austria, to whom the seigniory of the place belonged in property. But the town lay so conveniently for distressing the commerce of the Swiss, and inflicting on that people, whom he at once hated and despised, similar marks of his malevolence, as to encourage a general opinion that the Duke of Burgundy, the implacable and unreasonable enemy of these mountaineers, would never listen to any terms of redemption, however equitable or advantageous, which might have the effect of restoring to the Emperor an advanced post of such consequence to the gratification of his dislike as Brisach.

The situation of the little town was in itself strong, but the fortifications which surrounded it were barely sufficient to repel any sudden attack, and not adequate to resist for any length of time a formal siege. The morning beams had shone on the spire of the church for more than an hour, when a tall, thin, elderly man, wrapt in a morning gown, over which was buckled a broad belt, supporting on the left side a sword, on the right a dagger, approached the barbican of the eastern gate. His bonnet displayed a feather, which, or the tail of a fox in lieu of it, was the emblem of gentle blood throughout all Germany, and a badge highly prized by those who had a right to wear it.

The small party of soldiers who had kept watch there during the course of the preceding night, and supplied sentinels both for ward and outlook, took arms on the appearance of this individual, and drew themselves up in the form of a guard, which receives with military reverence an officer of importance. Archibald de Hagenbach's countenance, for it was the governor himself, expressed that settled peevishness and ill-temper which characterize the morning hours of a valetudinary debauchee. His head throbbed, his pulse was feverish, and his cheek was pale—symptoms of his having spent the last night, as was his usual custom, amid wine stoups and flagons. Judging from the haste with which his soldiers fell into their ranks, and the awe and silence which reigned among them it appeared that they were accustomed to expect and dread his ill-humor on such occasions. He glanced at them, accordingly, an inquisitive and dissatisfied look, as if he sought something on which to vent his peevishness and then asked for the "loitering dog Kilian."

Kilian presently made his appearance—a stout, hard-favored man-at-arms, a Bavarian by birth, and by rank the personal squire of the governor.

"What news of the Swiss churls, Kilian?" demanded Archibald de Hagenbach. "They should, by their thrifty habits, have been on the road two hours since. Have the peasant-clods presumed to ape the manners of gentlemen, and stuck by the flask till cock-crow?"

"By my faith, it may well be," answered Kilian: "the burghers of Bâle gave them full means of carousal."

"How, Kilian! They dared not offer hospitality to the Swiss drove of bullocks, after the charge we sent them to the contrary?"

"Nay, the Bâlese received them not into the town," replied the squire; "but I learned, by sure espial, that they afforded them means of quartering at Graffslust, which was furnished with many a fair gammon and pasty, to speak nought of flasks of Rhine wine, barrels of beer, and stoups of strong waters."

"The Bâlese shall answer this, Kilian," said the governor. "Do they think I am forever to be thrusting myself between the Duke and his pleasure on their behalf? The fat porkers have presumed too much since we accepted some trifling gifts at their hands, more for gracing of them than for any advantage we could make of their paltry donations. Was it not the wine from Bâle which we were obliged to drink out in pint goblets, lest it should become sour before morning?"

"It was drunk out, and in pint goblets too," said Kilian; "so much I can well remember."

"Why, go to, then," said the governor; "they shall know, these beasts of Bâle, that I hold myself no way obliged by such donations as these, and that my remembrance of the wines which I carouse rests no longer than the headache which the mixtures they drug me with never fail of late years to leave behind, for the next morning's pastime."

"Your Excellency," replied the squire, "will make it, then, a quarrel between the Duke of Burgundy and the city of Bâle, that they gave this indirect degree of comfort and assistance to the Swiss deputation?"

"Ay, marry will I," said De Hagenbach, "unless there be wise men among them who shall show me good reasons for protecting them. Oh, the Bâlese do not know our noble Duke, nor the gift he hath for chastising the gutter-blooded citizens of a free town. Thou canst tell them, Kilian, as

well as any man, how he dealt with the villains of Liege, when they would needs be pragmatical."

"I will apprise them of the matter," said Kilian, "when opportunity shall serve, and I trust I shall find them in a temper disposed to cultivate your honorable friendship."

"Nay, if it is the same to them, it is quite indifferent to me, Kilian," continued the governor; "but methinks whole and sound throats are worth some purchase, were it only to swallow black puddings and *schwarzbier,* to say nothing of Westphalian hams and Nierensteiner. I say, a slashed throat is a useless thing, Kilian."

"I will make the fat citizens to understand their danger, and the necessity of making interest," answered Kilian. "Sure, I am not now to learn how to turn the ball into your Excellency's lap."

"You speak well," said Sir Archibald. "But how chanced it thou hast so little to say to the Switzers' leaguer? I should have thought an old trooper like thee would have made their pinions flutter amidst the good cheer thou tellest me of."

"I might as well have annoyed an angry hedgehog with my bare finger," said Kilian. "I surveyed Graffslust myself: there were sentinels on the castle walls, a sentinel on the bridge, besides a regular patrol of these Swiss fellows who kept strict watch. So that there was nothing to be done; otherwise, knowing your Excellency's ancient quarrel, I would have had a hit at them, when they should never have known who hurt them. I will tell you, however, fairly, that these churls are acquiring better knowledge in the art of war than the best *ritter* (knight)."

"Well, they will be the better worth the looking after when they arrive," said De Hagenbach. "They come forth in state, doubtless, with all their finery, their wives' chains of silver, their own medals, and rings of lead and copper? Ah, the base hinds, they are unworthy that a man of noble blood should ease them of their trash!"

"There is better ware among them, if my intelligence hath not deceived me," replied Kilian: "there are merchants——"

"Pshaw! the packhorses of Berne and Soleure." said the governor, "with their paltry lumber, cloth too coarse to make covers for horses of any breeding, and linen that is more like haircloth than any composition of flax. I will strip them, however, were it but to vex the knaves. What! not content with claiming to be treated like an independent people, and

sending forth deputies and embassies forsooth, they expect, I warrant, to make the indemnities of ambassadors cover the introduction of a cargo of their contraband commodities, and thus insult the noble Duke of Burgundy and cheat him at the same time? But De Hagenbach is neither knight nor gentleman if he allow them to pass unchallenged."

"And they are better worth being stopped," said Kilian, "than your Excellency supposes; for they have English merchants along with them, and under their protection."

"English merchants!" exclaimed De Hagenbach, his eyes sparkling with joy—"English merchants, Kilian! Men talk of Cathay and Ind, where there are mines of silver, and gold, and diamonds; but, on the faith of a gentleman, I believe these brutish islanders have the caves of treasure wholly within their own foggy land! And then the variety of their rich merchandise! Ha, Kilian, is it a long train of mules—a jolly tinkling team? By Our Lady's glove! the sound of it is already jingling in my ears, more musically than all the harps of all the minnesingers at Heilbronn!"

"Nay, my lord, there is no great train," replied the squire: "only two men, as I am given to understand, with scarce so much baggage as loads a mule; but, it is said, of infinite value—silk and samite, lace and furs, pearls and jewelry-work, perfumes from the East, and gold-work from Venice."

"Raptures and paradise! say not a word more," exclaimed the rapacious knight of Hagenbach; "they are all our own, Kilian! Whw, these are the very men I have dreamed of twice a-week for this month past—ay, two men of middle stature, or somewhat under it, with smooth, round, fair, comely visages, having stomachs as plump as partridges, and purses as plump as their stomachs. Ha, what sayst thou to my dream, Kilian?"

"Only that, to be quite soothfast," answered the squire, "it should have included the presence of a score, or thereabouts, of sturdy young giants as ever climbed cliff or carried bolt to whistle at a chamois; a lusty plump of clubs, bills, and partizans, such as make shields crack like oaten cakes and helmets ring like church-bells."

"The better, knave—the better!" exclaimed the governor, rubbing his hands. "English peddlers to plunder! Swiss bullies to beat into submission! I wot well, we can have nothing of the Helvetian swine save their beastly bristles: it is lucky they bring these two island sheep along with them. But we must get ready our boar-spears, and clear the clipping-

pens for exercise of our craft. Here, Lieutenant Schonfeldt!"

An officer stepped forth.

"How many men are here on duty?"

"About sixty," replied the officer. "Twenty out on parties in different directions, and there may be forty or fifty in their quarters."

"Order them all under arms instantly; hark ye, not by trumpet or bugle, but by warning them individually in their quarters to draw to arms as quietly as possible, and rendezvous here at the eastern gate. Tell the villains there is booty to be gained, and they shall have their share."

"On these terms," said Schonfeldt, "they will walk over a spider's web without startling the insect that wove it. I will collect them without loss of an instant."

"I tell thee, Kilian," continued the exulting commandant, again speaking apart with his confidential attendant, "nothing could come so luckily as the chance of this onslaught. Duke Charles desires to affront the Swiss—not, look you, that he cares to act towards them, by his own direct orders, in such a manner as might be termed a breach of public faith towards a peaceful embassy; but the gallant follower who shall save his prince the scandal of such an affair, and whose actions may be termed a mistake or misapprehension, shall, I warrant you, be accounted to have done knightly service. Perchance a frown may be passed upon him in public, but in private the Duke will know how to esteem him. Why standest thou so silent, man, and what ails thy ugly, ill-looking aspect? Thou art not afraid of twenty Switzer boys, and we at the head of such a band of spears?"

"The Swiss," answered Kilian, "will give and take good blows, yet I have no fear of them. But I like not that we should trust too much to Duke Charles. That he would be, in the first instance, pleased with any dishonor done the Swiss is likely enough; but if, as your Excellency hints, he finds it afterwards convenient to disown the action, he is a prince likely to give a lively color to his disavowal by hanging up the actors."

"Pshaw!" said the commandant, "I know where I stand. Such a trick were like enough to be played by Louis of France, but it is foreign to the blunt character of our bold one of Burgundy. Why the devil stand'st thou still, man, simpering like an ape at a roasted chestnut, which he thinks too warm for his fingers?"

"Your Excellency is wise as well as warlike," said the

esquire, "and it is not for me to contest your pleasure. But this peaceful embassy—these English merchants—if Charles goes to war with Louis, as the rumor is current, what he should most of all desire is the neutrality of Switzerland, and the assistance of England, whose king is crossing the sea with a great army. Now you, Sir Archibald of Hagenbach, may well do that in the course of this very morning which will put the Confederated Cantons in arms against Charles, and turn the English from allies into enemies."

"I care not," said the commandant; "I know the Duke's humor well, and if he, the master of so many provinces, is willing to risk them in a self-willed frolic, what is it to Archibald de Hagenbach, who has not a foot of land to lose in the cause?"

"But you have life, my lord," said the esquire.

"Ay, life!" replied the knight—"a paltry right to exist, which I have been ready to stake every day of my life for dollars—ay, and for kreutzers—and think you I will hesitate to pledge it for broad-pieces, jewels of the East, and goldsmith's work of Venice? No, Kilian; these English must be eased of their bales, that Archibald de Hagenbach may drink a purer flask than their thin Moselle, and wear a brocade doublet instead of greasy velvet. Nor is it less necessary that Kilian should have a seemly new jerkin, with a purse of ducats to jingle at his girdle."

"By my faith," said Kilian, "that last argument hath disarmed my scruples, and I give up the point, since it ill befits me to dispute with your Excellency."

"To the work, then," said his leader. "But stay; we must first take the church along with us. The priest of St. Paul's hath been moody of late, and spread abroad strange things from the pulpit, as if we were little better than common pillagers and robbers. Nay, he hath had the insolence to warn me, as he termed it, twice, in strange form. It were well to break the growling mastiff's bald head; but, since that might be ill taken by the Duke, the next point of wisdom is to fling him a bone."

"He may be a dangerous enemy," said the squire, dubiously; "his power is great with the people."

"Tush!" replied Hagenbach, "I know how to disarm the shaveling. Send to him, and tell him to come hither to speak with me. Meanwhile, have all our force under arms; let the barbican and barrier be well manned with archers; station spearmen in the houses on each hand of the gateway; and let the street be barricaded with carts well bound to

gether, but placed as if they had been there by accident; place a body of determined fellows in these carts, and behind them. So soon as the merchants and their mules enter, for that is the main point, up with your drawbridge, down with the portcullis, send a volley of arrows among those who are without, if they make any scuffle; disarm and secure those who have entered, and are cooped up between the barricade before and the ambush behind and around them. And *then*, Kilian——"

"And then," said his esquire, "shall we, like merry Free Companions, be knuckle-deep in the English budgets——"

"And, like jovial hunters," replied the knight, "elbow-deep in Swiss blood."

"The game will stand at bay though," answered Kilian. "They are led by that Donnerhugel whom we have heard of, whom they call the Young Bear of Berne. They will turn to their defense."

"The better, man; wouldst thou kill sheep rather than hunt wolves? Besides, our toils are set, and the whole garrison shall assist. Shame on thee, Kilian, thou wert not wont to have so many scruples!"

"Nor have I now," said Kilian. "But these Swiss bills, and two-handed swords of the breadth of four inches, are no child's play. And then, if you call all our garrison to the attack, to whom will your Excellency entrust the defense of the other gates and the circuit of the walls?"

"Lock, bolt, and chain up the gates," replied the governor, "and bring the keys hither. There shall no one leave the place till this affair is over. Let some score of the citizens take arms for the duty of guarding the walls; and look they discharge it well, or I will lay a fine on them which they shall discharge to purpose."

"They will grumble," said Kilian. "They say that, not being the Duke's subjects, though the place is impledged to his Grace, they are not liable to military service."

"They lie! the cowardly slaves," answered De Hagenbach. "If I have not employed them much hitherto, it is because I scorn their assistance; nor would I now use their help, were it for anything save to keep a watch, by looking out straight before them. Let them obey, as they respect their property, persons, and families."

A deep voice behind them repeated the emphatic language of Scripture—"I have seen the wicked man flourish in his power even like unto a laurel, but I returned and he was not—yea, I sought him, but he was not to be found."

Sir Archibald de Hagenbach turned sternly, and encountered the dark and ominous looks of the priest of St. Paul's, dressed in the vestments of his order.

"We are busy, father," said the governor, "and will hear your preachments another time."

"I come by your summons, sir governor," said the priest, "or I had not intruded myself where I well knew my preachments, if you term them so, will do no good."

"O, I crave your mercy, reverend father," said De Hagenbach. "Yes, it is true that I did send for you, to desire your prayers and kind intercession with Our Lady and St. Paul in some transactions which are likely to occur this morning, and in which, as the Lombard says, I do espy *roba di guadagno.*"

"Sir Archibald," answered the priest, calmly, "I will hope and trust that you do not forget the nature of the glorified saints so far as to ask them for their blessing upon such exploits as you have been too oft engaged in since your arrival amongst us—an event which of itself gave token of the Divine anger. Nay, let me say, humble as I am, that decency to a servant of the altar should check you from proposing to me to put up prayers for the success of pillage and robbery."

"I understand you, father," said the rapacious governor, "and you shall see I do. While you are the Duke's subject, you must by your office put up your prayers for his success in matters that are fairly managed. You acknowledge this with a graceful bend of your reverend head? Well then, I will be as reasonable as you are. Say we desire the intercession of the good saints, and of you, their pious orator, in something a little out of the ordinary path, and, if you will, somewhat of a doubtful complexion—are we entitled to ask you or them for their pains and trouble without a just consideration? Surely no. Therefore I vow and solemnly promise that, if I have good fortune in this morning's adventure, St. Paul shall have an altar-cloth and a basin of silver, large or little, as my booty will permit; Our Lady a web of satin for a full suit, with a necklace of pearl for holidays; and thou, priest, some twenty pieces of broad English gold, for acting as go-between betwixt ourselves and the blessed Apostles, whom we acknowledge ourselves unworthy to negotiate with in our profane person. And now, sir priest, do we understand each other, for I have little time to lose? I know you have hard thoughts of me, but you see the devil is not quite so horrible as he is painted."

"Do we understand each other?" answered the black priest of St. Paul's, repeating the governor's question. "Alas, no! and I fear me we never shall. Hast thou never heard the words spoken by the holy hermit, Berchtold of Offringen, to the implacable Queen Agnes, who had revenged with such dreadful severity the assassination of her father, the Emperor Albert?"

"Not I," returned the knight; "I have neither studied the chronicles of emperors nor the legends of hermits; and, therefore, sir priest, an you like not my proposal, let us have no farther words on the matter. I am unwont to press my favors, or to deal with priests who require entreaty when gifts are held out to them."

"Hear yet the words of the holy man," said the priest. "The time may come, and that shortly, when you would gladly desire to hear what you scornfully reject."

"Speak on, but be brief," said Archibald de Hagenbach; "and know, though thou mayst terrify or cajole the multitude, thou now speakest to one whose resolution is fixed far beyond the power of thy eloquence to melt."

"Know, then," said the priest of St. Paul's, "that Agnes, daughter of the murdered Albert, after shedding oceans of blood in avenging his bloody death, founded at length the rich abbey of Koenigsfeldt; and, that it might have a superior claim to renowned sanctity, made a pilgrimage in person to the cell of the holy hermit, and besought of him to honor her abbey by taking up his residence there. But what was his reply? Mark it and tremble. 'Begone, ruthless woman,' said the holy man; 'God will not be served with blood-guiltiness, and rejects the gifts which are obtained by violence and robbery. The Almighty loves mercy, justice, and humanity, and by the lovers of these only will He be worshiped.' And now, Archibald of Hagenbach, once, twice, thrice hast thou had warning. Live as becomes a man on whom sentence is passed, and who must expect execution."

Having spoken these words with a menacing tone and frowning aspect, the priest of St. Paul's turned away from the governor, whose first impulse was to command him to be arrested. But, when he recollected the serious consequences which attached to the laying violent hands on a priest, he suffered him to depart in peace, conscious that his own unpopularity might render any attempt to revenge himself an act of great rashness. He called, therefore, for a beaker of Burgundy, in which he swallowed down his displeasure, and

had just returned to Kilian the cup, which he had drained to the bottom, when the warden winded a blast from the watchtower, which betokened the arrival of strangers at the gate of the city.

CHAPTER XIV

> I will resist such entertainment, till
> My enemy has more power.
>
> *The Tempest.*

"THAT blast was but feebly blown," said De Hagenbach, ascending to the ramparts, from which he could see what passed on the outside of the gate. "Who approaches, Kilian?"

The trusty squire was hastening to meet him with the news.

"Two men with a mule, an it please your Excellency; and merchants, I presume them to be."

"Merchants! 'Sdeath, villain! peddlers you mean. Heard ever man of English merchants tramping it on foot, with no more baggage than one mule can manage to carry? They must be beggarly Bohemians, or those whom the French people call Ecossais. The knaves! they shall pay with the pining of their paunches for the poverty of their purses."

"Do not be too hasty, an't please your Excellency," quoth the squire: "small budgets hold rich goods. But rich or poor, they are our men, at least they have all the marks: the elder, well-sized and dark-visaged, may write fifty-and-five years, a beard somewhat grizzled; the younger, some two-and-twenty, taller than the first, and a well-favored lad, with a smooth chin and light-brown mustachios."

"Let them be admitted," said the governor, turning back in order again to descend to the street, "and bring them into the *folterkammer* of the toll-house."

So saying, he betook himself to the place appointed, which was an apartment in the large tower that protected the eastern gateway, in which were deposited the rack, with various other instruments of torture, which the cruel and rapacious governor was in the habit of applying to such prisoners from whom he was desirous of extorting either booty or information. He entered the apartment, which was dimly lighted, and had a lofty Gothic roof which could be but imperfectly seen, while nooses and cords hanging down from thence announced a fearful connection with

various implements of rusted iron that hung round the walls or lay scattered on the floor.

A faint stream of light through one of the numerous and narrow slits, or shot-holes, with which the walls were garnished, fell directly upon the person and visage of a tall, swarthy man, seated in what, but for the partial illumination, would have been an obscure corner of this evil-boding apartment. His features were regular, and even handsome, but of a character peculiarly stern and sinister. This person's dress was a cloak of scarlet; his head was bare, and surrounded by shaggy locks of black, which time had partly grizzled. He was busily employed in furbishing and burnishing a broad two-handed sword, of a peculiar shape, and considerably shorter than the weapons of that kind which we have described as used by the Swiss. He was so deeply engaged in his task, that he started as the heavy door opened with a jarring noise, and the sword, escaping from his hold, rolled on the stone floor with a heavy clash.

"Ha! *scharfgerichter,*" said the knight, as he entered the *folterkammer,* "thou art preparing for thy duty?"

"It would ill become your Excellency's servant," answered the man, in a harsh, deep tone, "to be found idle. But the prisoner is not far off, as I can judge by the fall of my sword, which infallibly announces the presence of him who shall feel its edge."

"The prisoners are at hand, Francis," replied the governor; "but thy omen has deceived thee for once. They are fellows for whom a good rope will suffice, and thy sword drinks only noble blood."

"The worse for Francis Steinernherz," replied the official in scarlet: "I trusted that your Excellency, who have ever been a bountiful patron, should this day have made me noble."

"Noble!" said the governor; "thou art mad. Thou noble—the common executioner!"

"And wherefore not, Sir Archibald de Hagenbach? I think the name of Francis Steinernherz *von* Blutacker will suit nobility, being fairly and legally won, as well as another. Nay, do not stare on me thus. If one of my profession shall do his grim office on nine men of noble birth, with the same weapon, and with a single blow to each patient, hath he not a right to his freedom from taxes, and his nobility by patent?"

"So says the law," said Sir Archibald, after reflecting for a moment; "but rather more in scorn than seriously, I

should judge, since no one was ever known to claim the benefit of it."

"The prouder boast for him," said the functionary, "that shall be the first to demand the honors due to a sharp sword and a clean stroke. I, Francis Steinernherz, will be the first noble of my profession, when I shall have despatched one more knight of the Empire."

"Thou hast been ever in *my* service, hast thou not?" demanded De Hagenbach.

"Under what other master," replied the executioner, "could I have enjoyed such constant practice? I have executed your decrees on condemned sinners since I could swing a scourge, lift a crowbar, or wield this trusty weapon; and who can say I ever failed of my first blow, or needed to deal a second? Tristrem of the Hospital, and his famous assistants, Petit André and Trois-Eschelles,* are novices compared with me in the use of the noble and knightly sword. Marry, I should be ashamed to match myself with them in the field practice with bowstring and dagger; these are no feats worthy of a Christian man who would rise to honor and nobility."

"Thou art a fellow of excellent address, and I do not deny it," replied De Hagenbach. "But it cannot be—I trust it cannot be—that, when noble blood is becoming scarce in the land, and proud churls are lording it over knights and barons, I myself should have caused so much to be spilled?"

"I will number the patients to your Excellency by name and title," said Francis, drawing out a scroll of parchment, and reading with a commentary as he went on. "There was Count William of Elvershoe; he was my assay-piece, a sweet youth, and died most like a Christian."

"I remember; he was indeed a most smart youth, and courted my mistress," said Sir Archibald.

"He died on St. Jude's, in the year of grace 1455," said the executioner.

"Go on, but name no dates," said the governor.

"Sir Miles of Stockenborg——"

"He drove off my cattle," observed his Excellency.

"Sir Louis of Riesenfeldt——" continued the executioner.

"He made love to my wife," commented the governor.

"The three Jungherrn of Lammerborg; you made their father, the count, childless in one day."

* Three well-known characters who figure in *Quentin Durward* (*Laing*).

"And he made me landless," said Sir Archibald, "so that account is settled. Thou needest read no farther," he continued, "I admit thy record, though it is written in letters somewhat of the reddest. I had counted these three young gentlemen as one execution."

"You did me the greater wrong," said Francis: "they cost three good separate blows of this good sword."

"Be it so, and God be with their souls," said Hagenbach. "But thy ambition must go to sleep for a while, *scharfgerichter*, for the stuff that came hither to-day is for dungeon and cord, or perhaps a touch of the rack or strappado: there is no honor to win on them."

"The worse luck mine," said the executioner. "I had dreamed so surely that your honor had made me noble—and then the fall of my sword?"

"Take a bowl of wine, and forget your auguries."

"With your honor's permission, no," said the executioner: "to drink before noon were to endanger the nicety of my hand."

"Be silent, then, and mind your duty," said De Hagenbach.

Francis took up his sheathless sword, wiped the dust reverently from it, and withdrew into a corner of the chamber, where he stood leaning with his hands on the pommel of the fatal weapon.

Almost immediately afterwards, Kilian entered at the head of five or six soldiers, conducting the two Philipsons, whose arms were tied down with cords.

"Approach me a chair," said the governor, and took his place gravely beside a table, on which stood writing-materials. "Who are these men, Kilian, and wherefore are they bound?"

"So please your Excellency," said Kilian, with a deep respect of manner which entirely differed from the tone, approaching to familiarity, with which he communicated with his master in private, "we thought it well that these two strangers should not appear armed in your gracious presence; and when we required of them to surrender their weapons at the gate, as is the custom of the garrison, this young gallant must needs offer resistance. I admit he gave up his weapon at his father's command."

"It is false!" exclaimed young Philipson; but his father making a sign to him to be silent, he obeyed instantly.

"Noble sir," said the elder Philipson, "we are strangers, and unacquainted with the rules of this citadel; we are

Englishmen, and unaccustomed to submit to personal mishandling; we trust you will have excuse for us, when we found ourselves, without any explanation of the cause, rudely seized on by we knew not whom. My son, who is young and unthinking, did partly draw his weapon, but desisted at my command, without having altogether unsheathed his sword, far less made a blow. For myself, I am a merchant, accustomed to submit to the laws and customs of the countries in which I traffic; I am in the territories of the Duke of Burgundy, and I know his laws and customs must be just and equitable. He is the powerful and faithful ally of England, and I fear nothing while under his banner."

"Hem—hem!" replied De Hagenbach, a little disconcerted by the Englishman's composure, and perhaps recollecting that, unless his passions were awakened, as in the case of the Swiss, whom he detested, Charles of Burgundy deserved the character of a just though severe prince. "Fair words are well, but hardly make amends for foul actions. You have drawn swords in riot and opposition to the Duke's soldiers, when obeying the mandates which regulate their watch."

"Surely, sir," answered Philipson, "this is a severe construction of a most natural action. But, in a word, if you are disposed to be rigorous, the simple action of drawing, or attempting to draw, a sword in a garrison town is only punishable by pecuniary fine, and such we must pay, if it be your will."

"Now, here is a silly sheep," said Kilian to the executioner, beside whom he had stationed himself, somewhat apart from the group, "who voluntarily offers his own fleece to the clipper."

"It will scarcely serve as a ransom for his throat, sir squire," answered Francis Steinernherz; "for, look you, I dreamed last night that our master made me noble, and I knew by the fall of my sword that this is the man by whom I am to mount to gentility. I must this very day deal on him with my good sword."

"Why, thou ambitious fool," said the esquire, "this is no noble, but an island peddler—a mere English citizen."

"Thou art deceived," said the executioner, "and hast never looked on men when they are about to die."

"Have I not?" said the squire. "Have I not looked on five pitched fields, besides skirmishes and ambuscades innumerable?"

"That tries not the courage," said the *scharfgerichter.*

"All men will fight when pitched against each other. So will the most paltry curs, so will the dunghill fowls. But he is brave and noble who can look on a scaffold and a block, a priest to give him absolution, and the headsman and good sword which is to mow him down in his strength, as he would look upon things indifferent; and such a man is that whom we now behold."

"Yes," answered Kilian, "but that man looks not on such an apparatus: he only sees our illustrious patron, Sir Archibald de Hagenbach."

"And he who looks upon Sir Archibald," said the executioner, "being, as yonder man assuredly is, a person of sense and apprehension, looks he not upon sword and headsman? Assuredly that prisoner apprehends as much, and being so composed as he is under such conviction, it shows him to be a nobleman by blood, or may I myself never win nobility!"

"Our master will come to compromise with him, I judge," replied Kilian; "he looks smilingly on him."

"Never trust to me then," said the man in scarlet; "there is a glance in Sir Archibald's eye which betokens blood, as surely as the dog-star bodes pestilence."

While these dependants of Sir Archibald de Hagenbach were thus conversing apart, their master had engaged the prisoners in a long train of captious interrogatories concerning their business in Switzerland, their connection with the Landamman, and the cause of their traveling into Burgundy, to all which the senior Philipson gave direct and plain answers, excepting to the last. He was going, he said, into Burgundy, for the purpose of his traffic; his wares were at the disposal of the governor, who might detain all, or any part, of them, as he might be disposed to make himself answerable to his master. But his business with the Duke was of a private nature, respecting some particular matters of commerce, in which others as well as he himself were interested. To the Duke alone, he declared, would he communicate the affair; and he pressed it strongly on the governor, that, if he should sustain any damage in his own person or that of his son, the Duke's severe displeasure would be the inevitable consequence.

De Hagenbach was evidently much embarrassed by the steady tone of his prisoner, and more than once held counsel with the bottle, his never-failing oracle in cases of extreme difficulty. Philipson had readily surrendered to the governor a list or invoice of his merchandise, which was of so inviting a character, that Sir Archibald absolutely gloated over it.

After remaining in deep meditation for some time, he raised his head and spoke thus :—

"You must be well aware, sir merchant, that it is the Duke's pleasure that no Swiss merchandise shall pass through his territories ; and that, nevertheless, you having been, by your own account, some time in that country, and having also accompanied a body of men calling themselves Swiss deputies, I am authorized to believe that these valuable articles are rather the property of those persons than of a single individual of so poor an appearance as yourself, and that, should I demand pecuniary satisfaction, three hundred pieces of gold would not be an extravagant fine for so bold a practice ; and you might wander where you will with the rest of your wares, so you bring them not into Burgundy."

"But it is to Burgundy, and to the Duke's presence, that I am expressly bound," said the Englishman. "If I go not thither my journey is wrecked, and the Duke's displeasure is certain to light on those who may molest me. For I make your Excellency aware, that your gracious prince already knows of my journey, and will make strict inquiry where and by whom I have been intercepted."

Again the governor was silent, endeavoring to decide how he might best reconcile the gratification of his rapacity with precaution for his safety. After a few minutes' consideration, he again addressed his prisoner.

"Thou art very positive in thy tale, my good friend ; but my orders are equally so to exclude merchandise coming from Switzerland. What if I put thy mule and baggage under arrest ?"

"I cannot withstand your power, my lord, to do what you will. I will in that case go to the Duke's footstool and do my errand there."

"Ay, and my errand also," answered the governor. "That is, thou wilt carry thy complaint to the Duke against the governor of La Ferette, for executing his orders too strictly ?"

"On my life and honest word," answered the Englishman, "I will make no complaint. Leave me but my ready money, without which I can hardly travel to the Duke's court, and I will look no more after these goods and wares than the stag looks after the antlers which he shed last year."

Again the governor of La Ferette looked doubtful, and shook his head.

"Men in such a case as yours," he said, "cannot be trusted, nor, to say truth, is it reasonable to expect they

should be trustworthy. These same wares, designed for the Duke's private hand, in what do they consist ?"

"They are under seal," replied the Englishman.

"They are of rare value, doubtless ?" continued the governor.

"I cannot tell," answered the elder Philipson; "I know the Duke sets great store by them. But your Excellency knows that great princes sometimes place a high value on trifles."

"Bear you them about you ?" said the governor. "Take heed how you answer. Look around you on these engines, which can bring a dumb man to speak, and consider I have the power to employ them !"

"And I the courage to support their worst infliction," answered Philipson, with the same impenetrable coolness which he had maintained throughout the whole conference.

"Remember also," said Hagenbach, "that I can have your person searched as thoroughly as your mails and budgets."

"I do remember that I am wholly in thy power; and that I may leave thee no excuse for employing force on a peaceful traveler, I will own to you," said Philipson, "that I have the Duke's packet in the bosom of my doublet."

"Bring it forth," answered the governor.

"My hands are tied, both in honor and literally," said the Englishman.

"Pluck it from his bosom, Kilian," said Sir Archibald; "let us see this gear he talks of."

"Could resistance avail," replied the stout merchant, "you should pluck forth my heart first. But I pray all who are present to observe that the seals are every one whole and unbroken at this moment when it is forcibly taken from my person."

As he spoke thus, he looked around on the soldiers, whose presence De Hagenbach had perhaps forgotten.

"How, dog !" said Sir Archibald, giving way to his passion, "would you stir up mutiny among my men-at-arms ? Kilian, let the soldiers wait without."

So saying, he hastily placed under cover of his own robe the small but remarkably well-secured packet which Kilian had taken from the merchant's person. The soldiers withdrew, lingering, however, and looking back, like children brought away from a show before its final conclusion.

"So, fellow !" again began De Hagenbach, "we are now

more private. Wilt thou deal more on the level with me, and tell me what this packet is, and whence it comes?"

"Could all your garrison be crowded into this room, I can only answer as before. The contents I do not precisely know; the person by whom it was sent I am determined not to name."

"Perhaps your son," said the governor, "may be more compliant."

"He cannot tell you that of which he is himself ignorant," answered the merchant.

"Perchance the rack may make you both find your tongues; and we will try it on the young fellow first, Kilian, since thou knowest we have seen men shrink from beholding the wrenched joints of their children, that would have committed their own old sinews to the stretching with much endurance."

"You may make the trial," said Arthur, "and Heaven will give me strength to endure——"

"And me courage to behold," added his father.

All this while the governor was turning and returning the little packet in his hand, curiously inspecting every fold, and regretting, doubtless, in secret, that a few patches of wax, placed under an envelope of crimson satin, and ligatures of twisted silk cord, should prevent his eager eyes from ascertaining the nature of the treasure which he doubted not it concealed. At length he again called in the soldiers, and delivered up the two prisoners to their charge, commanding that they should be kept safely, and in separate holds, and that the father, in particular, should be most carefully looked after.

"I take you all here to witness," exclaimed the elder Philipson, despising the menacing signs of De Hagenbach, "that the governor detains from me a packet, addressed to his most gracious lord and master, the Duke of Burgundy."

De Hagenbach actually foamed at the mouth with passion.

"And should I *not* detain it?" he exclaimed, in a voice inarticulate with rage. "May there not be some foul practise against the life of our most gracious sovereign, by poison or otherwise, in this suspicious packet, brought by a most suspicious bearer? Have we never heard of poisons which do their work by the smell? And shall we, who keep the gate, as I may say, of his Grace of Burgundy's dominions, give access to what may rob Europe of its pride of chivalry, Burgundy of its prince, and Flanders of her father? No!

Away with these miscreants, soldiers—down to the lowest dungeons with them—keep them separate, and watch them carefully. This treasonable practise has been meditated with the connivance of Berne and Soleure."

Thus Sir Archibald de Hagenbach raved, with a raised voice and inflamed countenance, lashing himself as it were into passion, until the steps of the soldiers, and the clash of their arms, as they retired with the prisoners, were no longer audible. His complexion, when these had ceased, waxed paler than was natural to him, his brow was furrowed with anxious wrinkles, and his voice became lower and more hesitating than ordinary, as, turning to his esquire, he said, "Kilian, we stand upon a slippery plank, with a raging torrent beneath us. What is to be done?"

"Marry, to move forward with a resolved yet prudent step," answered the crafty Kilian. "It is unlucky that all these fellows should have seen the packet, and heard the appeal of yonder iron-nerved trader. But this ill-luck has befallen us, and the packet having been in your Excellency's hands, you will have all the credit of having broken the seals; for, though you leave them as entire as the moment they were impressed, it will only be supposed they have been ingeniously replaced. Let us see what are the contents, before we determine what is to be done with them. They must be of rare value, since the churl merchant was well contented to leave behind all his rich mule's-load of merchandise, so that this precious packet might pass unexamined."

"They may be papers on some political matter. Many such, and of high importance, pass secretly between Edward of England and our bold Duke." Snch was the reply of De Hagenbach.

"If they be papers of consequence to the Duke," answered Kilian, "we can forward them to Dijon. Or they may be such as Louis of France would purchase with their weight of gold."

"For shame, Kilian," said the knight; "wouldst thou have me betray my master's secrets to the King of France? Sooner would I lay my head on the block."

"Indeed! And yet your Excellency hesitates not to——"

Here the squire stopped, apparently for fear of giving offence, by affixing a name too broad and intelligible to the practises of his patron.

"To plunder the Duke, thou wouldst say, thou impudent slave! And, saying so, thou wouldst be as dull as thou art wont to be," answered De Hagenbach. "I partake, indeed,

in the plunder which the Duke takes from aliens; and reason good. Even so the hound and the hawk have their share of the quarry they bring down—ay, and the lion's share, too, unless the huntsman or falconer be all the nearer to them. Such are the perquisites of my rank; and the Duke, who placed me here for the gratification of his resentment, and the bettering of my fortune, does not grudge them to a faithful servant. And, indeed, I may term myself, in so far as this territory of La Ferette extends, the Duke's full representative, or, as it may be termed, *alter ego;* and, thereupon, I will open this packet, which, being addressed to him, is thereby equally addressed to me."

Having thus in a manner talked himself up to an idea of his own high authority, he cut the strings of the packet, which he had all this while held in his hand, and, undoing the outer coverings, produced a very small case made of sandalwood.

"The contents," he said, "had need to be valuable, as they lie in so little compass."

So saying, he pressed the spring, and the casket, opening, displayed a necklace of diamonds, distinguished by brilliancy and size, and apparently of extraordinary value. The eyes of the avaricious governor, and his no less rapacious attendant, were so dazzled with the unusual splendor, that for some time they could express nothing save joy and surprise.

"Ay, marry, sir," said Kilian, "the obstinate old knave had reasons for his hardihood. My own joints should have stood a strain or two ere I surrendered such sparklers as these. And now, Sir Archibald, may your trusty follower ask you how this booty is to be divided between the Duke and his governor, according to the most approved rules of garrison towns?"

"Faith, we will suppose the garrison stormed, Kilian; and in a storm, thou know'st, the first finder takes all—with due consideration always of his trusty followers."

"As myself, for example," said Kilian.

"Ay, and myself, for example," answered a voice, which sounded like the echo of the esquire's words, from the remote corner of the ancient apartment.

"'Sdeath! we are overheard," exclaimed the governor, starting and laying his hand on his dagger.

"Only by a faithful follower, as the worthy esquire observes," said the executioner, moving slowly forward.

"Villain, how didst thou dare watch me?" said Sir Archibald de Hagenbach.

"Trouble not yourself for that, sir," said Kilian. "Honest Steinernherz has no tongue to speak, or ear to hear, save according to your pleasure. Indeed we must shortly have taken him into our counsels, seeing these men must be dealt upon, and that speedily."

"Indeed!" said De Hagenbach; "I had thought they might be spared."

"To tell the Duke of Burgundy how the governor of La Ferette accounts to his treasurer for the duties and forfeitures at his custom-house?" demanded Kilian.

"'Tis true," said the knight; "dead men have neither teeth nor tongue: they bite not, and they tell no tales. Thou wilt take order with them, *scharfgerichter*."

"I will, my lord," answered the executioner, "on condition that, if this must be in the way of dungeon execution, which I call cellar practise, my privilege to claim nobility shall be saved and reserved to me, and the execution shall be declared to be as effectual to my claim as it might have been if the blow had been dealt in broad daylight, with my honorable blade of office."

De Hagenbach stared at the executioner, as not understanding what he meant; on which Kilian took occasion to explain that the *scharfgerichter* was strongly impressed, from the free and dauntless conduct of the elder prisoner, that he was a man of noble blood, from whose decapitation he would himself derive all the advantages proposed to the headsman who should execute his function on nine men of illustrious extraction.

"He may be right," said Sir Archibald, "for here is a slip of parchment commending the bearer of this carcanet to the Duke, desiring him to accept it as a true token from one well known to him, and to give the bearer full credence in all that he should say on the part of those by whom he is sent."

"By whom is the note signed, if I may make bold to ask?" said Kilian.

"There is no name: the Duke must be supposed to collect that information from the gems, or perhaps the handwriting."

"On neither of which he is likely to have a speedy opportunity of exercising his ingenuity," said Kilian.

De Hagenbach looked at the diamonds, and smiled darkly. The *scharfgerichter*, encouraged by the familiarity into which he had in a manner forced himself, returned to his plea, and insisted on the nobility of the supposed merchant. Such a

trust, and such a letter of unlimited credence, could never, he contended, be entrusted to a man meanly born.*

"Thou art deceived, thou fool," said the knight: "kings now use the lowest tools to do their dearest offices. Louis has set the example of putting his barber and the valets of his chamber to do the work formerly entrusted to dukes and peers; and other monarchs begin to think that it is better, in choosing their agents for important affairs, to judge rather by the quality of men's brains than that of their blood. And as for the stately look and bold bearing which distinguish yonder fellow in the eyes of cravens like thee, it belongs to his country, not his rank. Thou think'st it is in England as in Flanders, where a city-bred burgher of Ghent, Liege, or Ypres is as distinct an animal from a knight of Hainault as a Flanders wagon horse from a Spanish jennet. But thou art deceived. England has many a merchant as haughty of heart and as prompt of hand as any noble-born son of her rich bosom. But be not dejected, thou foolish man; do thy business well on this merchant, and we shall presently have on our hands the Landamman of Unterwalden, who, though a churl by his choice, is yet a nobleman by blood, and shall, by his well-deserved death, aid thee to get rid of the peasant slough which thou art so weary of."

"Were not your Excellency better adjourn these men's fate," said Kilian, "till you hear something of them from the Swiss prisoners whom we shall presently have in our power?"

"Be it as you will," said Hagenbach, waving his hand, as if putting aside some disagreeable task. "But let all be finished ere I hear of it again."

The stern satellites bowed obedience, and the deadly conclave broke up, their chief carefully securing the valuable gems, which he was willing to purchase at the expense of treachery to the sovereign in whose employment he had enlisted himself, as well as the blood of two innocent men. Yet, with a weakness of mind not uncommon to great criminals, he shrunk from the thoughts of his own baseness and cruelty, and endeavored to banish the feeling of dishonor from his mind, by devolving the immediate execution of his villainy upon his subordinate agents.

* See Louis XI.'s Ministers. Note 2.

CHAPTER XV

And this place our forefathers built for man!
Old Play.

THE dungeon in which the younger Philipson was immured was one of those gloomy caverns which cry shame on the inhumanity of our ancestors.* They seem to have been almost insensible to the distinction betwixt innocence and guilt, as the consequences of mere accusation must have been far more severe in those days than is in our own that species of imprisonment which is adjudged as an express punishment for crime.

The cell of Arthur Philipson was of considerable length, but dark and narrow, and dug out of the solid rock upon which the tower was founded. A small lamp was allowed him, not, however, without some grumbling, but his arms were still kept bound; and when he asked for a draught of water, one of the grim satellites by whom he was thrust into this cell answered surlily, that he might endure his thirst for all the time his life was likely to last—a gloomy response, which augured that his privations would continue as long as his life, yet neither be of long duration. By the dim lamp he had groped his way to a bench, or rough seat, cut in the rock; and, as his eyes got gradually accustomed to the obscurity of the region in which he was immured, he became aware of a ghastly cleft in the floor of his dungeon, somewhat resembling the opening of a draw-well, but irregular in its aperture, and apparently the mouth of a gulf of nature's conformation, slightly assisted by the labor of human art.

"Here, then, is my death-bed," he said, "and that gulf perhaps the grave which yawns for my remains! Nay, I have heard of prisoners being plunged into such horrid abysses while they were yet alive, to die at leisure, crushed with wounds, their groans unheard, and their fate unpitied."

He approached his head to the dismal cavity, and heard, as at a great depth, the sound of a sullen, and, as it seemed, subterranean stream. The sunless waves appeared murmuring for their victim. Death is dreadful at all ages; but in

* See German Dungeon. Note 3.

the first springtide of youth, with all the feelings of enjoyment afloat and eager for gratification, to be snatched forcibly from the banquet to which the individual has but just sat down is peculiarly appalling, even when the change comes in the ordinary course of nature. But to sit, like young Philipson, on the brink of the subterranean abyss, and ruminate in horrid doubt concerning the mode in which death was to be inflicted, was a situation which might break the spirit of the boldest; and the unfortunate captive was wholly unable to suppress the natural tears that flowed from his eyes in torrents, and which his bound arms did not permit him to wipe away. We have already noticed that, although a gallant young man in aught of danger which was to be faced and overcome by active exertion, the youth was strongly imaginative, and sensitive to a powerful extent to all those exaggerations which, in a situation of helpless uncertainty, fancy lends to distract the soul of him who must passively expect an approaching evil.

Yet the feelings of Arthur Philipson were not selfish. They reverted to his father, whose just and noble character was as much formed to attract veneration as his unceasing paternal care and affection to excite love and gratitude. He, too, was in the hands of remorseless villains, who were determined to conceal robbery by secret murder; he, too, undaunted in so many dangers, resolute in so many encounters, lay bound and defenseless, exposed to the dagger of the meanest stabber. Arthur remembered, too, the giddy peak of the rock near Geierstein, and the grim vulture which claimed him as its prey. Here was no angel to burst through the mist, and marshal him on a path of safety; here the darkness was subterranean and eternal, saving when the captive should behold the knife of the ruffian flash against the lamp, which lent him light to aim the fatal blow. This agony of mind lasted until the feelings of the unhappy prisoner arose to ecstasy. He started up, and struggled so hard to free himself of his bonds, that it seemed they should have fallen from him as from the arms of the mighty Nazarene [Nazarite]. But the cords were of too firm a texture; and, after a violent and unavailing struggle, in which the ligatures seemed to enter his flesh, the prisoner lost his balance, and, while the feeling thrilled through him that he was tumbling backward into the subterranean abyss, he fell to the ground with great force.

Fortunately he escaped the danger which in his agony he apprehended, but so narrowly, that his head struck against

the low and broken fence with which the mouth of the horrible pit was partly surrounded. Here he lay stunned and motionless, and, as the lamp was extinguished in his fall, immersed in absolute and total darkness. He was recalled to sensation by a jarring noise.

"They come—they come, the murderers! Oh, Lady of Mercy! and oh, gracious Heaven, forgive my transgressions!"

He looked up, and observed with dazzled eyes that a dark form approached him, with a knife in one hand and a torch in the other. He might well have seemed the man who was to do the last deed upon the unhappy prisoner, if he had come alone. But he came not alone: his torch gleamed upon the white dress of a female, which was so much illuminated by it, that Arthur could discover a form, and had even a glimpse of features, never to be forgotten, though now seen under circumstances least of all to be expected. The prisoner's unutterable astonishment impressed him with a degree of awe which overcame even his personal fear. "Can these things be?" was his muttered reflection—"has she really the power of an elementary spirit?—has she conjured up this earthlike and dark demon to concur with her in my deliverance?"

It appeared as if his guess were real; for the figure in black, giving the light to Anne of Geierstein, or at least the form which bore her perfect resemblance, stooped over the prisoner, and cut the cord that bound his arms, with so much despatch that it seemed as if it fell from his person at a touch. Arthur's first attempt to arise was unsuccessful, and a second time it was the hand of Anne of Geierstein—a living hand, sensible to touch as to sight—which aided to raise and to support him, as it had formerly done when the tormented waters of the river thundered at their feet. Her touch produced an effect far beyond that of the slight personal aid which the maiden's strength could have rendered. Courage was restored to his heart, vigor and animation to his benumbed and bruised limbs; such influence does the human mind, when excited to energy, possess over the infirmities of the human body. He was about to address Anne in accents of the deepest gratitude; but the accents died away on his tongue when the mysterious female, laying her finger on her lips, made him a sign to be silent, and at the same time beckoned him to follow her. He obeyed in silent amazement. They passed the entrance of the melancholy dungeon, and through one or two short but intricate passages, which, cut out of the rock in some places, and built

in others with hewn stone of the same kind, probably led to holds similar to that in which Arthur was so lately a captive.

The recollection that his father might be immured in some such horrid cell as he himself had just quitted induced Arthur to pause as they reached the bottom of a small winding staircase, which conducted apparently from this region of the building.

"Come," he said, "dearest Anne, lead me to his deliverance! I must not leave my father."

She shook her head impatiently, and beckoned him on.

"If your power extends not to save my father's life, I will remain and save him or die! Anne—dearest Anne——"

She answered not; but her companion replied, in a deep voice, not unsuitable to his appearance, "Speak, young man, to those who are permitted to answer you; or rather be silent, and listen to my instructions, which direct to the only course which can bring thy father to freedom and safety."

They ascended the stair, Anne of Geierstein going first; while Arthur, who followed close behind, could not help thinking that her form gave existence to a part of the light which her garment reflected from the torch. This was probably the effect of the superstitious belief impressed on his mind by Rudolph's tale respecting her [grand]mother, and which was confirmed by her sudden appearance in a place and situation where she was so little to have been expected. He had not much time, however, to speculate upon her appearance or demeanor, for, mounting the stair with a lighter pace than he was able at the time to follow closely, she was no longer to be seen when he reached the landing-place. But whether she had melted into the air, or turned aside into some other passage, he was not permitted a moment's leisure to examine.

"Here lies your way," said his sable guide; and at the same time dashing out the light and seizing Philipson by the arm, he led him along a dark gallery of considerable length. The young man was not without some momentary misgivings, while he recollected the ominous looks of his conductor, and that he was armed with a dagger, or knife, which he could plunge of a sudden into his bosom. But he could not bring himself to dread treachery from any one whom he had seen in company with Anne of Geierstein; and in his heart he demanded her pardon for the fear which had flashed across him, and resigned himself to the guidance

of his companion, who advanced with hasty but light footsteps, and cautioned him by a whisper to do the same.

"Our journey," he at length said, "ends here."

As he spoke, a door gave way and admitted them into a gloomy Gothic apartment, furnished with large oaken presses, apparently filled with books and manuscripts. As Arthur looked round, with eyes dazzled with the sudden gleam of daylight, from which he had been for some time excluded, the door by which they had entered disappeared. This, however, did not greatly surprise him, who judged that, being formed in appearance to correspond with the presses around the entrance which they had used, it could not when shut be distinguished from them—a device sometimes then practised, as indeed it often is at the present day. He had now a full view of his deliverer, who, when seen by daylight, showed only the vestments and features of a clergyman, without any of that expression of supernatural horror which the partial light and the melancholy appearance of all in the dungeon had combined to impress on him.

Young Philipson once more breathed with freedom, as one awakened from a hideous dream; and the supernatural qualities with which his imagination had invested Anne of Geierstein having begun to vanish, he addressed his deliverer thus—"That I may testify my thanks, holy father, where they are so especially due, let me inquire of you if Anne of Geierstein——"

"Speak of that which pertains to your house and family," answered the priest, as briefly as before. "Hast thou so soon forgot thy father's danger?"

"By Heavens, no!" replied the youth; "tell me but how to act for his deliverance, and thou shalt see how a son can fight for a parent!"

"It is well, for it is needful," said the priest. "Don thou this vestment, and follow me."

The vestment presented was the gown and hood of a novice.

"Draw the cowl over thy face," said the priest, "and return no answer to any man who meets thee. I will say thou art under a vow. May Heaven forgive the unworthy tyrant who imposes on us the necessity of such profane dissimulation! Follow me close and near; beware that you speak not."

The business of diguise was soon accomplished, and the priest of St. Paul's, for such he was, moving on, Arthur followed him a pace or two behind, assuming as well as he could the modest step and humble demeanor of a spiritual novice.

On leaving the library, or study, and descending a short stair, he found himself in the street of Brisach. Irresistibly tempted to look back, he had only time, however, to see that the house he had left was a very small building of a Gothic character, on the one side of which rose the church of St. Paul's, and on the other the stern black gate-house, or entrance-tower.

"Follow me, Melchior," said the deep voice of the priest; and his keen eyes were at the same time fixed upon the supposed novice, with a look which instantly recalled Arthur to a sense of his situation.

They passed along, nobody noticing them, unless to greet the priest with a silent obeisance, or muttered phrase of salutation, until, having nearly gained the middle of the village, the guide turned abruptly off from the street, and, moving northward by a short lane, reached a flight of steps, which, as usual in fortified towns, led to the banquette, or walk, behind the parapet, which was of the old Gothic fashion, flanked with towers from space to space, of different forms and various heights at different angles.

There were sentinels on the walls; but the watch, as it seemed, was kept not by regular soldiers, but by burghers, with spears or swords in their hands. The first whom they passed said to the priest, in a half-whispered tone, "Holds our purpose?"

"It holds," replied the priest of St. Paul's. "*Benedicite!*"

"*Deo gratias!*" replied the armed citizen, and continued his walk upon the battlements.

The other sentinels seemed to avoid them; for they disappeared when they came near, or passed them without looking or seeming to observe them. At last their walk brought them to an ancient turret, which raised its head above the wall, and in which there was a small door opening from the battlement. It was in a corner, distinct from and uncommanded by any of the angles of the fortification. In a well-guarded fortress, such a point ought to have had a sentinel for its special protection, but no one was there upon duty.

"Now mark me," said the priest, "for your father's life, and, it may be, that of many a man besides, depends upon your attention, and no less upon your despatch. You can run?—you can leap?"

"I feel no weariness, father, since you freed me," answered Arthur; "and the dun deer that I have often chased shall not beat me in such a wager."

"Observe, then," replied the black priest of St. Paul's;

"this turret contains a staircase, which descends to a small sally-port. I will give you entrance to it. The sally-port is barred on the inside, but not locked. It will give you access to the moat, which is almost entirely dry. On crossing it, you will find yourself in the circuit of the outer barriers. You may see sentinels, but they will not see you; speak not to them, but make your way over the palisade as you can. I trust you can climb over an undefended rampart?"

"I have surmounted a defended one," said Arthur. "What is my next charge? All this is easy."

"You will see a species of thicket, or stretch of low bushes; make for it with all speed. When you are there, turn to the eastward; but beware, while holding that course, that you are not seen by the Burgundian Free Companions, who are on watch on that part of the walls. A volley of arrows, and the sally of a body of cavalry in pursuit, will be the consequence, if they get sight of you; and their eyes are those of the eagle, that spy the carnage afar off."

"I will be heedful," said the young Englishman.

"You will find," continued the priest, "upon the outer side of the thicket a path, or rather a sheep-track, which, sweeping at some distance from the walls, will conduct you at last into the road leading from Brisach to Bâle. Hasten forward to meet the Swiss, who are advancing. Tell them your father's hours are counted, and that they must press on if they would save him; and say to Rudolph Donnerhugel, in especial, that the black priest of St. Paul's waits to bestow upon him his blessing at the northern sally-port. Dost thou understand me?"

"Perfectly," answered the young man.

The priest of St. Paul's then pushed open the low-browed gate of the turret, and Arthur was about to precipitate himself down the stair which opened before him.

"Stay yet a moment," said the priest, "and doff the novice's habit, which can only encumber thee."

Arthur in a trice threw it from him, and was again about to start.

"Stay yet a moment longer," continued the black priest. "This gown may be a tell-tale; stay, therefore, and help me to pull off my upper garment."

Inwardly glowing with impatience, Arthur yet saw the necessity of obeying his guide; and when he had pulled the long and loose upper vestment from the old man, he stood before him in a cassock of black serge, befitting his order and profession, but begirt, not with a suitable sash such as

clergymen wear, but with a most uncanonical buff-belt, supporting a short two-edged sword, calculated alike to stab and to smite.

"Give me now the novice's habit," said the venerable father, "and over that I will put the priestly vestment. Since for the present I have some tokens of the laity about me, it is fitting it should be covered with a double portion of the clerical habit."

As he spoke thus he smiled grimly; and his smile had something more frightful and withering than the stern frown, which suited better with his features, and was their usual expression.

"And now," said he, "what does the fool tarry for, when life and death are in his speed?"

The young messenger waited not a second hint, but at once descended the stairs, as if it had been by a single step, found the portal, as the priest had said, only secured by bars on the inside, offering little resistance save from their rusted state, which made it difficult to draw them. Arthur succeeded, however, and found himself at the side of the moat, which presented a green and marshy appearance. without stopping to examine whether it was deep or shallow, and almost without being sensible of the tenacity of the morass, the young Englishman forced his way through it, and attained the opposite side, without attracting the attention of two worthy burghers of Brisach, who were the guardians of the barriers. One of them, indeed, was deeply employed in the perusal of some profane chronicle or religious legend; the other was as anxiously engaged in examining the margin for of the moat, in search of eels, perhaps, or frogs, for he wore over his shoulder a scrip for securing some such amphibious booty.

Seeing that, as the priest foretold, he had nothing to apprehend from the vigilance of the sentinels, Arthur dashed at the palisade, in hope to catch hold of the top of the stockade, and so to clear it by one bold leap. He overrated his powers of activity, however, or they were diminished by his recent bonds and imprisonment. He fell lightly backwards on the ground, and, as he got to his feet, became aware of the presence of a soldier, in yellow and blue, the livery of De Hagenbach, who came running towards him, crying to the slothful and unobservant sentinels, "Alarm—alarm! you lazy swine! Stop the dog, or you are both dead men."

The fisherman, who was on the further side, laid down his

eel-spear, drew his sword, and, flourishing it over his head, advanced towards Philipson with very moderate haste. The student was yet more unfortunate, for, in his hurry to fold up his book and attend to his duty, he contrived to throw himself (inadvertently, doubtless) full in the soldier's way. The latter, who was running at top speed, encountered the burgher with a severe shock, which threw both down; but the citizen, being a solid and substantial man, lay still where he fell, while the other, less weighty, and probably less prepared for the collision, lost his balance and the command of his limbs at once, and, rolling over the edge of the moat, was immersed in the mud and marsh. The fisher and the student went with deliberate speed to assist the unexpected and unwelcome partner of their watch; while Arthur, stimulated by the imminent sense of danger, sprung at the barrier with more address and vigor than before, and, succeeding in his leap, made, as he had been directed, with his utmost speed for the covert of the adjacent bushes. He reached them without hearing any alarm from the walls. But he was conscious that his situation had become extremely precarious, since his escape from the town was known to one man, at least, who would not fail to give the alarm in case he was able to extricate himself from the marsh—a feat, however, in which it seemed to Arthur that the armed citizens were likely to prove rather his apparent than actual assistants.

While such thoughts shot across his mind, they served to augment his natural speed of foot, so that, in less space than could have been thought possible, he reached the thinner extremity of the thicket, whence, as intimated by the black priest, he could see the eastern tower and the adjoining battlements of the town—

With hostile faces throng'd, and fiery arms.

It required, at the same time, some address on the part of the fugitive to keep so much under shelter as to prevent himself from being seen in his turn by those whom he saw so plainly. He therefore expected every moment to hear a bugle wind, or to behold that bustle and commotion among the defenders which might prognosticate a sally. Neither, however, took place, and heedfully observing the footpath, or track, which the priest had pointed out to him, young Philipson wheeled his course out of sight of the guarded towers, and soon falling into the public and frequented road, by which his father and he had approached the town in the

morning, he had the happiness, by the dust and flash of arms, to see a small body of armed men advancing towards Brisach, whom he justly concluded to be the van of the Swiss deputation.

He soon met the party, which consisted of about ten men, with Rudolph Donnerhugel at their head. The figure of Philipson, covered with mud, and in some places stained with blood, for his fall in the dungeon had cost him a slight wound, attracted the wonder of every one who crowded around to hear the news. Rudolph alone appeared unmoved. Like the visage on the ancient statues of Hercules, the physiognomy of the bulky Bernese was large and massive, having an air of indifferent and almost sullen composure, which did not change but in moments of the fiercest agitation.

He listened without emotion to the breathless tale of Arthur Philipson, that his father was in prison, and adjudged to death.

"And what else did you expect?" said the Bernese, coldly. "Were you not warned! It had been easy to have foreseen the misfortune, but it may be impossible to prevent it."

"I own—I own," said Arthur, wringing his hands, "that you were wise, and that we were foolish. But oh! do not think of our folly in the moment of our extremity. Be the gallant and generous champion which your cantons proclaim you: give us your aid in this deadly strait."

"But how, or in what manner?" said Rudolph, still hesitating. "We have dismissed the Bâlese, who were willing to have given assistance, so much did your dutiful example weigh with us. We are now scarce above a score of men; how can you ask us to attack a garrison town, secured by fortifications, and where there are six times our number?"

"You have friends within the fortifications," replied Arthur—"I am sure you have. Hark in your ear. The black priest sent to you—to you, Rudolph Donnerhugel of Berne—that he waits to give you his blessing at the northern sally-port."

"Ay, doubtless," said Rudolph, shaking himself free of Arthur's attempt to engage him in private conference, and speaking so that all around might hear him, "there is little doubt on't: I will find a priest at the northern sally-port to confess and absolve me, and a block, ax, and headsman to strike my throat asunder when he has done. But I will scarce put the neck of my father's son into such risk. If they assassinate an English peddler who has never offended

them, what will they do with the Bear of Berne, whose fangs and talons Archibald de Hagenbach has felt ere now ?"

Young Philipson at these words clasped his hands together, and held them up to Heaven, as one who abandons hope, excepting from thence. The tears started to his eyes, and, clenching his hands and setting his teeth, he turned his back abruptly upon the Swiss.

"What means this passion ?" said Rudolph. "Whither would you now ?"

"To rescue my father, or perish with him," said Arthur ; and was about to run wildly back to La Ferette, when a strong but kindly grasp detained him.

"Tarry a little till I tie my garter," said Sigismund Biederman, "and I will go with you, King Arthur."

"You, oaf ?" exclaimed Rudolph—"you ? and without orders ?"

"Why, look you, cousin Rudolph," said the youth, continuing, with great composure, to fasten his garter, which, after the fashion of the time, was somewhat intricately secured, "you are always telling us that we are Swiss and freemen ; and what is the advantage of being a freeman, if one is not at liberty to do what he has a mind ? You are my hauptman, look you, so long as it pleases me and no longer."

"And why shouldst thou desert me now, thou fool ? Why at this minute, of all other minutes in the year ?" demanded the Bernese.

"Look you," replied the insubordinate follower, "I have hunted with Arthur for this month past, and I love him : he never called me fool or idiot because my thoughts came slower, maybe, and something duller, than those of other folk. And I love his father : the old man gave me this baldrick and this horn, which I warrant cost many a kreutzer. He told me, too, not to be discouraged, for that it was better to think justly than to think fast, and that I had sense enough for the one if not for the other. And the kind old man is now in Hagenbach's butcher shambles ! But we will free him, Arthur, if two men may. Thou shalt see me fight while steel blade and ashen shaft will hold together."

So saying, he shook in the air his enormous partizan, which quivered in his grasp like a slip of willow. Indeed, if iniquity was to be struck down like an ox, there was not one in that chosen band more likely to perform the feat than Sigismund ; for, though somewhat shorter in stature than his brethren, and of a less animated spirit, yet his breadth of shoulders and strength of muscles were enormous, and if

thoroughly aroused and disposed for the contest, which was very rarely the case, perhaps Rudolph himself might, as far as sheer force went, have had difficulty in matching him.

Truth of sentiment and energy of expression always produce an effect on natural and generous characters. Several of the youths around began to exclaim that Sigismund said well; that, if the old man had put himself in danger, it was because he thought more of the success of their negotiation than of his own safety, and had taken himself from under their protection rather than involve them in quarrels on his account. "We are the more bound," they said, "to see him unscathed, and we will do so."

"Peace! all you wiseacres," said Rudolph, looking round with an air of superiority; "and you, Arthur of England, pass on to the Landamman, who is close behind; you know he is our chief commander, he is no less your father's sincere friend, and, whatever he may determine in your father's favor, you will find most ready executors of his pleasure in all of us."

His companions appeared to concur in this advice, and young Philipson saw that his own compliance with the recommendation was indispensable. Indeed, although he still suspected that the Bernese, by his various intrigues, as well with the Swiss youth as with those of Bâle, and, as might be inferred from the priest of St. Paul's, by communication even within the town of La Ferette, possessed the greater power of assisting him at such a conjuncture, yet he trusted far more in the simple candor and perfect faith of Arnold Biederman, and pressed forward to tell to him his mournful tale, and crave his assistance.

From the top of a bank which he reached in a few minutes after he parted from Rudolph and the advanced guard, he saw beneath him the venerable Landamman and his associates, attended by a few of the youths, who no longer were dispersed upon the flanks of the party, but attended on them closely, and in military array, as men prepared to repel any sudden attack.

Behind came a mule or two with baggage, together with the animals which, in the ordinary course of their march, supported Anne of Geierstein and her attendant. Both were occupied by female figures as usual, and, to the best of Arthur's ken, the foremost had the well-known dress of Anne, from the gray mantle to a small heron's plume, which, since entering Germany, she had worn in compliance with the custom of the country, and in evidence of her rank as a

maiden of birth and distinction. Yet, if the youth's eyes brought him true tidings at present, what was the character of their former information, when, scarce more than half an hour since, they had beheld, in the subterranean dungeon of Brisach, the same form which they now rested upon, in circumstances so very different! The feeling excited by this thought was powerful, but it was momentary, like the lightning which blazes through a midnight sky, which is but just seen ere it vanishes into darkness. Or rather, the wonder excited by this marvelous incident only maintained its ground in his thoughts by allying itself with the anxiety for his father's safety, which was their predominant occupation.

"If there be indeed a spirit," he said, "which wears that beautiful form, it must be beneficent as well as lovely, and will extend to my far more deserving father the protection which his son has twice experienced."

But ere he had time to prosecute such a thought farther, he had met the Landamman and his party. Here his appearance and his condition excited the same surprise as they had formerly occasioned to Rudolph and the vanguard. To the repeated interrogatories of the Landamman, he gave a brief account of his own imprisonment, and of his escape, of which he suffered the whole glory to rest with the black priest of St. Paul's, without mentioning one word of the more interesting female apparition, by which he had been attended and assisted in his charitable task. On another point also Arthur was silent. He saw no propriety in communicating to Arnold Biederman the message which the priest had addressed to Rudolph's ear alone. Whether good should come of it or no, he held sacred the obligation of silence imposed upon him by a man from whom he had just received the most important assistance.

The Landamman was struck dumb for a moment with sorrow and surprise at the news which he heard. The elder Philipson had gained his respect, as well by the purity and steadiness of the principles which he expressed as by the extent and depth of his information, which was peculiarly valuable and interesting to the Switzer, who felt his admirable judgment considerably fettered for want of that knowledge of countries, times, and manners with which his English friend often supplied him.

"Let us press forward," he said to the banneret of Berne and the other deputies; "let us offer our mediation betwixt the tyrant De Hagenbach and our friend, whose life is in danger. He must listen to us, for I know his master ex-

pects to see this Philipson at his court. The old man hinted to me so much. As we are possessed of such a secret, Archibald de Hagenbach will not dare to brave our vengeance, since we might easily send to Duke Charles information how the governor of La Ferette abuses his power, in matters where not only the Swiss, but where the Duke himself is concerned."

"Under your reverend favor, my worthy sir," answered the banneret of Berne, "we are Swiss deputies, and go to represent the injuries of Switzerland alone. If we embroil ourselves with the quarrels of strangers, we shall find it more difficult to settle advantageously those of our own country; and if the Duke should, by this villainy done upon English merchants, bring upon him the resentment of the English monarch, such breach will only render it more a matter of peremptory necessity for him to make a treaty advantageous to the Swiss cantons."

There was so much worldly policy in this advice, that Adam Zimmerman of Soleure instantly expressed his assent, with the additional argument, that their brother Biederman had told them scarce two hours before how these English merchants had, by his advice and their own free desire, parted company with them that morning, on purpose that they might not involve the deputies in the quarrels which might be raised by the governor's exactions on his merchandise.

"Now what advantage," he said, "shall we derive from this same parting of company, supposing, as my brother seems to urge, we are still to consider this Englishman's interest as if he were our fellow-traveler, and under our especial protection?"

This personal reasoning pinched the Landamman somewhat closely, for he had but a short while before descanted on the generosity of the elder Philipson, who had freely exposed himself to danger rather than that he should embarrass their negotiation by remaining one of their company; and it completely shook the fealty of the white-bearded Nicholas Bonstetten, whose eyes wandered from the face of Zimmerman, which expressed triumphant confidence in his argument, to that of his friend the Landamman, which was rather more embarrassed than usual.

"Brethren," said Arnold at length with firmness and animation, "I erred in priding myself upon the worldly policy which I taught to you this morning. This man is not of our country, doubtless, but he is of our blood—a copy of the

common Creator's image—and the more worthy of being called so, as he is a man of integrity and worth. We might not, without grievous sin, pass such a person, being in danger, without affording him relief, even if he lay accidentally by the side of our path; much less should we abandon him if the danger has been incurred in our own cause, and that we might escape the net in which he is himself caught. Be not, therefore, downcast. We do God's will in succoring an oppressed man. If we succeed by mild means, as I trust we shall, we do a good action at a cheap rate; if not, God can assert the cause of humanity by the hands of few as well as of many."

"If such is your opinion," said the bannerman of Berne, "not a man here will shrink from you. For me, I pleaded against my own inclinations when I advised you to avoid a breach with the Burgundian. But as a soldier, I must needs say, I would rather fight the garrison, were they double the number they talk of, in a fair field, than undertake to storm their defenses."

"Nay," said the Landamman, "I sincerely hope we shall both enter and depart from the town of Brisach without deviating from the pacific character with which our mission from the Diet invests us."

CHAPTER XVI

For Somerset, off with his guilty head!
Henry VI. Part III.

THE governor of La Ferette stood on the battlements of the eastern entrance-tower of his fortress, and looked out on the road to Bâle, when first the vanguard of the Swiss mission, then the center and rear, appeared in the distance. At the same moment the van halting, the main body closed with it, while the females and baggage, and mules in the rear, moved in their turn up to the main body, and the whole were united in one group.

A messenger then stepped forth, and winded one of those tremendous horns, the spoils of the wild bulls, so numerous in the canton of Uri that they are supposed to have given rise to his name.

"They demand admittance," said the esquire.

"They shall have it," answered Sir Archibald de Hagenbach. "Marry, how they may pass out again is another and a deeper question."

"Think yet a moment, noble sir," continued the esquire. "Bethink you, these Switzers are very fiends in fight, and have, besides, no booty to repay the conquest—some paltry chains of good copper, perchance, or adulterated silver. You have knocked out the marrow; do not damage your teeth by trying to grind the bone."

"Thou art a fool, Kilian," answered De Hagenbach, "and it may be a coward besides. The approach of some score, or at most some score and a half, of Swiss partizans makes thee draw in thy horns like a snail at a child's finger. Mine are strong and inflexible as those of the *urus*, of whom they talk so much, and on which they blow so boldly. Keep in mind, thou timid creature, that if the Swiss deputies, as they presume to call themselves, are permitted to pass free, they carry to the Duke stories of merchants bound to his court, and fraught with precious commodities, specially addressed to his Grace. Charles has then at once to endure the presence of the ambassadors, whom he contemns and hates, and learns by them that the governor of La Ferette, permitting such to pass, has nevertheless presumed to stop those

whom he would full gladly see; for what prince would not blythely welcome such a casket at that which we have taken from yonder strolling English peddler?"

"I see not how the assault on these ambassadors will mend your Excellency's plea for despoiling the Englishmen," said Kilian.

"Because thou art a blind mole, Kilian," answered his chief. "If Burgundy hears of a ruffle between my garrison and the mountain churls, whom he scorns, and yet hates, it will drown all notice of the two peddlers who have perished in the fray. If after-inquiry should come, an hour's ride transports me with my confidants into the Imperial dominions, where, though the Emperor be a spiritless fool, the rich prize I have found on these islanders will ensure me a good reception."

"I will stick by your Excellency to the last," returned the esquire; "and you shall yourself witness that, if a fool, I am at least no coward."

"I never thought thee such when it came to hand-blows," said De Hagenbach; "but in policy thou art timid and irresolute. Hand me mine armor, Kilian, and beware thou brace it well. The Swiss pikes and swords are no wasp stings."

"May your Excellency wear it with honor and profit," said Kilian; and, according to the duty of his office, he buckled upon his principal the complete panoply of a knight of the Empire. "Your purpose of assaulting the Swiss then holds firm," said Kilian. "But what pretext will your Excellency assign?"

"Let me alone," said Archibald de Hagenbach, "to take one or to make one. Do you only have Schonfeldt and the soldiers on their stations. And remember the words are—'Burgundy to the rescue.' When these words are first spoken, let the soldiers show themselves; when repeated, let them fall on. And now that I am accoutered, away to the churls and admit them."

Kilian bowed and withdrew.

The bugle of the Switzers had repeatedly emitted its angry roar, exasperated by the delay of nearly half an hour, without an answer from the guarded gate of Brisach; and every blast declared, by the prolonged echoes which it awakened, the increased impatience of those who summoned the town. At length the portcullis arose, the gate opened, the drawbridge fell, and Kilian, in the equipage of a man-at-arms arrayed for fight, rode forth on an ambling palfrey.

"What bold men are ye, sirs, who are here in arms before the fortress of Brisach, appertaining in right and seigniory to the thrice noble Duke of Burgundy and Lorraine, and garrisoned for his cause and interest by the excellent Sir Archibald, Lord of Hagenbach, knight of the Most Holy Roman Empire?"

"So please you, sir esquire," said the Landamman, "for such I conjecture you to be by the feather in your bonnet, we are here with no hostile intentions, though armed, as you see, to defend us in a perilous journey, where we are something unsafe by day, and cannot always repose by night in places of security. But our arms have no offensive purpose; if they had such, our numbers had not been so few as you see them."

"What, then, is your character and purpose?" said Kilian, who had learned to use, in his master's absence, the lordly and insolent tone of the governor himself.

"We are delegates," answered the Landamman, in a calm and even tone of voice, without appearing to take offense at, or to observe, the insolent demeanor of the esquire, "from the Free and Confederated Cantons of the Swiss states and provinces, and from the good town of Soleure, who are accredited from our Diet of Legislature to travel to the presence of his Grace the Duke of Burgundy, on an errand of high importance to both countries, and with the hope of establishing with your master's lord—I mean with the noble Duke of Burgundy—a sure and steadfast peace, upon such terms as shall be to the mutual honor and advantage of both countries, and to avert disputes and the effusion of Christian blood, which may otherwise be shed for want of timely and good understanding."

"Show me your letters of credence," said the esquire.

"Under your forgiveness, sir esquire," replied the Landamman, "it will be time enough to exhibit these when we are admitted to the presence of your master the governor."

"That is as much as to say, wilful will to it. It is well, my master; and yet you may take this advice from Kilian of Kersberg; It is sometimes better to reel backwards than to run forwards. My master, and my master's master, are more ticklish persons than the dealers of Bâle, to whom you sell your cheeses. Home, honest men—home! your way lies before you, and you are fairly warned."

"We thank thee for thy counsel," said the Landamman, interrupting the banneret of Berne, who had commenced an angry reply, "supposing it kindly meant; if not, an uncivil

jest is like an overcharged gun, which recoils on the cannoneer. Our road lies onward through Brisach, and onward we propose to go, and take such hap as that which we may find before us."

"Go onward then, in the devil's name," said the squire, who had entertained some hope of deterring them from pursuing their journey, but found himself effectually foiled.

The Switzers entered the town, and, stopped by the barricade of cars which the governor had formed across the street, at about twenty yards from the gate, they drew themselves up in military order, with their little body formed into three lines, the two females and the fathers of the deputation being in the center. The little phalanx presented a double front, one to each side of the street, while the center line faced so as to move forward, and only waited for the removal of the barricade in order to do so. But while they stood thus inactive, a knight in complete armor appeared from a side door of the great tower, under the arch of which they had entered into the town. His visor was raised, and he walked along the front of the little line formed by the Swiss with a stern and frowning aspect.

"Who are you," he said, "who have thus far intruded yourselves in arms into a Burgundian garrison?"

"With your Excellency's leave," said the Landamman, "we are men who come on a peaceful errand, though we carry arms for our own defense. Deputies we are from the towns of Berne and Soleure, the cantons of Uri, Schwytz, and Unterwalden, come to adjust matters of importance with the gracious Duke of Burgundy and Lorraine."

"What towns, what cantons?" said the governor of La Ferette. "I have heard no such names among the Free Cities of Germany. Berne, truly! when became Berne a free state?"

"Since the twenty-first day of June," said Arnold Biederman, "in the year of grace one thousand three hundred and thirty-nine, on which day the battle of Laupen was fought."

"Away, vain old man," said the knight; "thinkest thou that such idle boasts can avail thee here? We have heard, indeed, of some insurgent villages and communities among the Alps, and how they rebelled against the Emperor, and, by the advantage of fastnesses, ambuscades, and lurking-places, how they have murdered some knights and gentlemen sent against them by the Duke of Austria; but we little thought that such paltry townships and insignificant bands of mutineers had the insolence to term themselves free states,

and propose to enter into negotiation as such with a mighty prince like Charles of Burgundy."

"May it please your Excellency," replied the Landamman, with perfect temper, "your own laws of chivalry declare that, if the stronger wrong the weaker, or the noble does injury to the less gentle, the very act levels distinctions between them, and the doer of an injury becomes bound to give condign satisfaction, of such kind as the wronged party shall demand."

"Hence to thy hills, churl!" exclaimed the haughty knight; "there comb thy beard and roast thy chestnuts. What! because a few rats and mice find retreat among the walls and wainscoting of our dwelling-houses, shall we therefore allow them to intrude their disgusting presence, and their airs of freedom and independence, into our personal presence? No, we will rather crush them beneath the heel of our ironshod boots."

"We are not men to be trodden on," said Arnold Biederman, calmly; "those who have attempted it have found us stumbling-blocks. Lay, sir knight—lay aside for an instant this haughty language, which can only lead to warfare, and listen to the words of peace. Dismiss our comrade, the English merchant Philipson, on whom you have this morning laid unlawful hands; let him pay a moderate sum for his ransom, and we, who are bound instantly to the Duke's presence, will bear a fair report to him of his governor of La Ferette."

"You will be so generous, will you!" said Sir Archibald, in a tone of ridicule. "And what pledge shall I have that you will favor me so kindly as you propose?"

"The word of a man who never broke his promise," answered the stoical Landamman.

"Insolent hind!" replied the knight, "dost thou stipulate? *Thou* offer thy paltry word as a pledge betwixt the Duke of Burgundy and Archibald de Hagenbach? Know that ye go not to Burgundy at all, or you go thither with fetters on your hands and halters round your necks. So ho, Burgundy to the rescue!"

Instantly, as he spoke, the soldiers showed themselves before, behind, and around the narrow space where the Swiss had drawn themselves up. The battlements of the town were lined with men; others presented themselves at the doors of each house in the street, prepared to sally, and, at the windows, prepared to shoot, as well with guns as with bows and cross-bows. The soldiers who defended the barricade also

started up, and seemed ready to dispute the passage in front. The little band, encompassed and overmatched, but neither startled nor disheartened, stood to their arms. The center rank under the Landamman prepared to force their way over the barricade. The two fronts stood back to back, ready to dispute the street with those that should issue from the houses. It could not fail to prove a work of no small blood and toil to subdue this handful of determined men, even with five times their number. Some sense of this, perhaps, made Sir Archibald delay giving the signal for onset, when suddenly behind arose a cry of "Treason—treason!"

A soldier, covered with mud, rushed before the governor, and said, in hurried accents, that, as he endeavored to stop a prisoner who had made his escape some short time since, he had been seized by the burghers of the town, and wellnigh drowned in the moat. He added, that the citizens were even now admitting the enemy into the place.

"Kilian," said the knight, "take two score of men; hasten to the northern sally-port; stab, cut down, or throw from the battlements whomsoever you meet in arms, townsmen or strangers. Leave me to settle with these peasants by fair means or foul."

But ere Kilian could obey his master's commands a shout arose in the rear, where they cried, "Bâle—Bâle! Freedom—freedom! The day is our own!"

Onward came the youth of Bâle, who had not been at such a distance but that Rudolph had contrived to recall them; onward came many Swiss who had hovered around the embassy, holding themselves in readiness for such a piece of service; and onward came the armed citizens of La Ferette, who, compelled to take arms and mount guard by the tyranny of De Hagenbach, had availed themselves of the opportunity to admit the Bâlese at the sally-port through which Philipson had lately made his escape.

The garrison, somewhat discouraged before by the firm aspect of the Swiss, who had held their numbers at defiance, were totally disconcerted by this new and unexpected insurrection. Most of them prepared rather to fly than to fight, and they threw themselves in numbers from the walls, as the best chance of escaping. Kilian and some others, whom pride prevented from flying, and despair from asking quarter, fought with fury, and were killed on the spot. In the midst of this confusion the Landamman kept his own bands unmoved, permitting them to take no share in the action, save to repel such violence as was offered to them.

"Stand fast all!" sounded the deep voice of Arnold Biederman along their little body. "Where is Rudolph? Save lives, but take none. Why, how now, Arthur Philipson! stand fast I say."

"I cannot stand fast," said Arthur, who was in the act of leaving the ranks. "I must seek my father in the dungeons: they may be slaying him in this confusion while I stand idle here."

"By Our Lady of Einsiedlen, you say well," answered the Landamman; "that I should have forgot my noble guest! I will help thee to search for him, Arthur—the affray seems wellnigh ended. Ho, there, sir banneret, worthy Adam Zimmerman, my good friend Nicholas Bonstetten, keep our men standing firm. Have nothing to do with this affray, but leave the men of Bâle to answer their own deeds. I return in a few minutes."

So saying he hurried after Arthur Philipson, whose recollection conducted him, with sufficient accuracy, to the head of the dungeon stairs. There they met an ill-looking man clad in a buff jerkin, who bore at his girdle a bunch of rusted keys, which intimated the nature of his calling.

"Show me the prison of the English merchant," said Arthur Philipson, "or thou diest by my hand."

"Which of them desire you to see," answered the official —"the old man or the young one?"

"The old," said young Philipson. "His son has escaped thee."

"Enter here, then, gentlemen," said the jailer, undoing the spring-bolt of a heavy door.

At the upper end of the apartment lay the man they came to seek for, who was instantly raised from the ground and loaded with their embraces.

"My dear father!" "My worthy guest!" said his son and friend at the same moment, "how fares it with you?"

"Well," answered the elder Philipson, "if you, my friend and son, come, as I judge from your arms and countenance, as conquerors, and at liberty; ill, if you come to share my prison house."

"Have no fear of that," said the Landamman; "we have been in danger, but are remarkably delivered. Your evil lair has benumbed you. Lean on me, my noble guest, and let me assist you to better quarters."

Here he was interrupted by a heavy clash, as it seemed, of iron, and differing from the distant roar of the popular

tumult, which they still heard from the open street, as men hear the deep voice of a remote and tempestuous ocean.

"By St. Peter of the Fetters!" said Arthur, who instantly discovered the cause of the sound, "the jailer has cast the door to the staple, or it has escaped his grasp. The spring-lock has closed upon us, and we cannot be liberated saving from the outside. Ho, jailer dog! villain! open the door, or thou diest."

"He is probably out of hearing of your threats," said the elder Philipson, "and your cries avail you nothing. But are you sure the Swiss are in possession of the town?"

"We are peaceful occupants of it," answered the Landamman, "though without a blow given on our side."

"Why, then," said the Englishman, "your followers will soon find you out. Arthur and I are paltry ciphers, and our absence might easily pass over unobserved; but you are too important a figure not be missed and looked after, when the sum of your number is taken."

"I well hope it will prove so," said Landamman, "though methinks I show but scurvily, shut up here like a cat in a cupboard when he has been stealing cream. Arthur, my brave boy, dost thou see no means of shooting back the bolt?"

Arthur, who had been minutely examining the lock, replied in the negative; and added, that they must take patience perforce, and arm themselves to wait calmly their deliverance, which they could do nothing to accelerate.

Arnold Biederman, however, felt somewhat severely the neglect of his sons and companions.

"All my youths, uncertain whether I am alive or dead, are taking the opportunity of my absence, doubtless, for pillage and license; and the politic Rudolph, I presume, cares not if I should never reappear on the stage; the banneret and the white-bearded fool Bonstetten, who calls me his friend—every neighbor has deserted me; and yet they know that I am anxious for the safety of the most insignificant of them all, as dearer to me than my own. By Heavens! it looks like stratagem; and shows as if the rash young men desired to get rid of a rule too regular and peaceful to be pleasing to those who are eager for war and conquest."

The Landamman, fretted out of his usual serenity of temper, and afraid of the misbehavior of his countrymen in his absence, thus reflected upon his friends and companions, while the distant noise soon died away into the most absolute and total silence.

"What is to do now?" said Arthur Philipson. "I trust

they will take the opportunity of quiet to go through the roll-call, and inquire then who are missing."

It seemed as if the young man's wish had some efficacy, for he had scarce uttered it before the lock was turned, and the door set ajar by some one who escaped upstairs from behind it before those who were set at liberty could obtain a glance of their deliverer.

"It is the jailer, doubtless," said the Landamman, "who may be apprehensive, as he has some reason, that we might prove more incensed at our detention in the dungeon than grateful for our deliverance."

As they spoke thus, they ascended the narrow stairs, and issued from the door of the gate-house tower, where a singular spectacle awaited them. The Swiss deputies and their escort still remained standing fast and firm on the very spot where Hagenbach had proposed to assail them. A few of the late governor's soldiers, disarmed, and cowering from the rage of a multitude of the citizens, who now filled the streets, stood with downcast looks behind the phalanx of the mountaineers, as their safest place of retreat. But this was not all.

The cars, so lately placed to obstruct the passage of the street, were now joined together, and served to support a platform, or scaffold, which had been hastily constructed of planks. On this was placed a chair, in which sat a tall man, with his head, neck, and shoulders bare, the rest of his body clothed in bright armor. His countenance was as pale as as death, yet young Philipson recognized the hard-hearted governor, Sir Archibald de Hagenbach. He appeared to be bound to the chair. On his right, and close beside him, stood the priest of St. Paul's muttering prayers, with his breviary in his hand; while on his left, and somewhat behind the captive, appeared a tall man, attired in red, and leaning with both hands on the naked sword which has been described on a former occasion. The instant that Arnold Biederman appeared, and before the Landamman could open his lips to demand the meaning of what he saw, the priest drew back, the executioner stepped forward, the sword was brandished, the blow was struck, and the victim's head rolled on the scaffold. A general acclamation and clapping of hands, like that by which a crowded theater approves of some well-graced performer, followed this feat of dexterity. While the headless corpse shot streams from the arteries, which were drunk up by the sawdust that strewed the scaffold, the executioner gracefully presented himself alternately at the

four corners of the stage, modestly bowing, as the multitude greeted him with cheers of approbation.

"Nobles, knights, gentlemen of free-born blood, and good citizens," he said, "who have assisted at this act of high justice, I pray you to bear me witness that this judgment hath been executed after the form of the sentence, at one blow, and without stroke missed or repeated."

The acclamations were reiterated: "Long live our *scharfgerichter* Steinernherz, and many a tyrant may he do his duty on!"

"Noble friends," said the executioner, with the deepest obeisance, "I have yet another word to say, and it must be a proud one. God be gracious to the soul of this good and noble knight, Sir Archibald de Hagenbach. He was the patron of my youth, and my guide to the path of honor. Eight steps have I made towards freedom and nobility on the heads of freeborn knights and nobles who have fallen by his authority and command; and the ninth, by which I have attained it, is upon his own, in grateful memory of which I will expend this purse of gold, which but an hour since he bestowed on me, in masses for his soul. Gentlemen, noble friends, and now my equals, La Ferette has lost a nobleman and gained one. Our Lady be gracious to the departed knight, Sir Archibald de Hagenbach, and bless and prosper the progress of Stephen [Francis] Steinernherz von Blutacker, now free and noble of right!" *

With that he took the feather out of the cap of the deceased, which, soiled with the blood of the wearer, lay near his body upon the scaffold, and, putting it into his own official bonnet, received the homage of the crowd in loud huzzas, which were partly in earnest, partly in ridicule of such an unusual transformation.

Arnold Biederman at length found breath, which the extremity of surprise had at first denied him. Indeed, the whole execution had passed much too rapidly for the possibility of his interference.

"Who has dared to act this tragedy?" he said indignantly; "and by what right has it taken place?"

A cavalier, richly dressed in blue, replied to the question —"The free citizens of Bâle have acted for themselves, as the fathers of Swiss liberty set them an example; and the tyrant, De Hagenbach, has fallen by the same right which put to death the tyrant Geysler. We bore with him till his cup was brimming over, and then we bore no longer."

* See Public Executioner. Note 4.

"I say not but that he deserved death," replied the Landamman; "but, for your own sake and for ours, you should have forborne him till the Duke's pleasure was known."

"What tell you us of the Duke?" answered Laurenz Neipperg, the same blue cavalier whom Arthur had seen at the secret rendezvous of the Bâlese youth, in company with Rudolph. "Why talk you of Burgundy to us, who are none of his subjects? The Emperor, our only rightful lord, had no title to pawn the town and fortifications of La Ferette, being as it is a dependency of Bâle, to the prejudice of our free city. He might have pledged the revenue indeed; and supposing him to have done so, the debt has been paid twice over by the exactions levied by yonder oppressor, who has now received his due. But pass on, Landamman of Unterwalden. If our actions displease you, abjure them at the footstool of the Duke of Burgundy; but, in doing so, abjure the memory of William Tell and Stauffacher, of Furst and Melchthal, the fathers of Swiss freedom."

"You speak truth," said the Landamman; "but it is in an ill-chosen and unhappy time. Patience would have remedied your evils, which none felt more deeply, or would have redressed more willingly, than I. But O, imprudent young man, you have thrown aside the modesty of your age and the subjection you owe to your elders. William Tell and his brethren were men of years and judgment, husbands and fathers, having a right to be heard in council and to be foremost in action. Enough—I leave it with the fathers and senators of your own city to acknowledge or to reprove your actions. But you, my friends—you, banneret of Berne—you, Rudolph—above all, you, Nicholas Bonstetten, my comrade and my friend, why did you not take this miserable man under your protection? The action would have shown Burgundy that we were slandered by those who have declared us desirous of seeking a quarrel with him, or of inciting his subjects to revolt. Now, all these prejudices will be confirmed in the minds of men naturally more tenacious of evil impressions than of those which are favorable."

"As I live by bread, good gossip and neighbor," answered Nicholas Bonstetten, "I thought to obey your injunctions to a tittle; so much so, that I once thought of breaking in and protecting the man, when Rudolph Donnerhugel reminded me that your last orders were to stand firm, and let the men of Bâle answer for their own actions; 'and surely,' said I to myself, 'my gossip Arnold knows better than all of us what is fitting to be done.'"

"Ah, Rudolph—Rudolph," said the Landamman, looking on him with a displeased countenance, "wert thou not ashamed thus to deceive an old man?"

"To say I deceived him is a hard charge; but from you, Landamman," answered the Bernese, with his usual deference, "I can bear anything. I will only say that, being a member of this embassy, I am obliged to think and to give my opinion as such, especially when he is not present who is wise enough to lead and direct us all."

"Thy words are always fair, Rudolph," replied Arnold Biederman, "and I trust so is thy meaning. Yet there are times when I somewhat doubt it. But let disputes pass, and let me have your advice, my friends; and for that purpose go we where it may best profit us, even to the church, where we will first return our thanks for our deliverance from assassination, and then hold counsel what next is to be done."

The Landamman led the way, accordingly, to the church of St. Paul's, while his companions and associates followed in their order. This gave Rudolph, who, as youngest, suffered the others to precede him, an opportunity to beckon to him the Landamman's eldest son, Rudiger, and whisper to him to get rid of the two English merchants.

"Away with them, my dear Rudiger, by fair means if possible; but away with them directly. Thy father is besotted with these two English peddlers, and will listen to no other counsel; and thou and I know, dearest Rudiger, that such men as these are unfit to give laws to freeborn Switzers. Get the trumpery they have been robbed of, or as much of it as is extant, together as fast as thou canst, and send them a-traveling in Heaven's name."

Rudiger nodded intelligently, and went to offer his services to expedite the departure of the elder Philipson. He found the sagacious merchant as desirous to escape from the the scene of confusion now presented in the town as the young Swiss could be to urge his departure. He only waited to recover the casket of which De Hagenbach had possessed himself, and Rudiger Biederman set on foot a strict search after it, which was the more likely to be successful, that the simplicity of the Swiss prevented them from setting the true value upon its contents. A strict and hasty search was immediately instituted, both on the person of the dead De Hagenbach, on which the precious packet was not to be found, and on all who had approached him at his execution, or were supposed to enjoy his confidence.

Young Arthur Philipson would gladly have availed himself of a few moments to bid farewell to Anne of Geierstein. But the gray wimple was no longer seen in the ranks of the Switzers, and it was reasonable to think that, in the confusion which followed the execution of De Hagenbach, and the retreat of the leaders of the little battalion, she had made her escape into some of the adjacent houses, while the soldiers around her, no longer restrained by the presence of their chiefs, had dispersed, some to search for the goods of which the Englishmen had been despoiled, others doubtless to mingle with and join in the rejoicings of the victorious youths of Bâle, and of those burghers of La Ferette by whom the fortifications of the town had been so gently surrendered.

The cry amongst them was universal, that Brisach, so long considered as the curb of the Swiss confederates, and the barrier against their commerce, should henceforth be garrisoned as their protection against the encroachments and exactions of the Duke of Burgundy and his officers. The whole town was in a wild but joyful jubilee, while the citizens vied with each other in offering to the Swiss every species of refreshment, and the youths who attended upon the mission hurried gaily and in triumph to profit by the circumstances which had so unexpectedly converted the ambuscade so treacherously laid for them into a genial and joyous reception.

Amid this scene of confusion, it was impossible for Arthur to quit his father, even to satisfy the feelings which induced him to wish for a few moments at his own disposal. Sad, thoughtful, and sorrowful, amid the general joy, he remained with the parent whom he had so much reason to love and honor, to assist him in securing and placing on their mule the various packages and bales which the honest Switzers had recovered after the death of De Hagenbach, and which they emulated each other in bringing to their rightful owner; while they were with difficulty prevailed on to accept the guerdon which the Englishman, from the means which he had still left upon his person, was disposed not merely to offer but to force upon the restorers of his property, and which, in their rude and simple ideas, seemed greatly to exceed the value of what they had recovered for him.

This scene had scarcely lasted ten or fifteen minutes, when Rudolph Donnerhugel approached the elder Philipson, and in a tone of great courtesy invited him to join the council

of the chiefs of the embassy of the Swiss cantons, who, he said, were desirous of having the advantage of his experience upon some important questions respecting their conduct on these unexpected occurrences.

"See to our affairs, Arthur, and stir not from the spot on which I leave you," said Philipson to his son. "Look especially after the sealed packet of which I was so infamously and illegally robbed: its recovery is of the utmost consequence."

So speaking, he instantly prepared himself to attend the Bernese, who in a confidential manner whispered, as he went arm-in-arm with him towards the church of St. Paul's—

"I think a man of your wisdom will scarce advise us to trust ourselves to the mood of the Duke of Burgundy, when he has received such an injury as the loss of this fortress and the execution of his officer. You, at least, would be too judicious to afford us any farther the advantage of your company and society, since to do so would be wilfully to engage in our shipwreck."

"I will give my best advice," answered Philipson, "when I shall be more particularly acquainted with the circumstances under which it is asked of me."

Rudolph muttered an oath, or angry exclamation, and led Philipson to the church without farther argument.

In a small chapel adjoining to the church, and dedicated to St. Magnus the Martyr, the four deputies were assembled in close conclave around the shrine in which the sainted hero stood, armed as when he lived. The priest of St. Paul's was also present, and seemed to interest himself deeply in the debate which was taking place. When Philipson entered, all were for a moment silent, until the Landamman addressed him thus—"Signior Philipson, we esteem you a man far traveled, well versed in the manners of foreign lands, and acquainted with the conditions of this Duke Charles of Burgundy—you are therefore fit to advise us in a matter of great weight. You know with what anxiety we go on this mission of peace with the Duke; you also know what has this day happened, which may probably be represented to Charles in the worst colors; would you advise us, in such a case, to proceed to the Duke's presence, with the odium of this action attached to us, or should we do better to return home, and prepare for war with Burgundy?"

"How do your own opinions stand on the subject?" said the cautious Englishman.

"We are divided," answered the banneret of Berne. "I

have borne the banner of Berne against her foes for thirty years; I am more willing to carry it against the lances of the knights of Hainault and Lorraine than to undergo the rude treatment which we must look to meet at the footstool of the Duke."

"We put our heads in the lion's mouth if we go forward," said Zimmerman of Soleure; "my opinion is, that we draw back."

"I would not advise retreat," said Rudolph Donnerhugel, "were my life alone concerned; but the Landamman of Unterwalden is the father of the United Cantons, and it would be parricide if I consented to put his life in peril. My advice is, that we return, and that the Confederacy stand on their defense."

"My opinion is different," said Arnold Biederman; "nor will I forgive any man who, whether in sincere or feigned friendship, places my poor life in the scale with the advantage of the cantons. If we go forward, we risk our heads—be it so. But if we turn back, we involve our country in war with a power of the first magnitude in Europe. Worthy citizens! you are brave in fight, show your fortitude as boldly now; and let us not hesitate to incur such personal danger as may attend ourselves, if by doing so we can gain a chance of peace for our country."

"I think and vote with my neighbor and gossip, Arnold Biederman," said the laconic deputy from Schwytz.

"You hear how we are divided in opinion," said the Landamman to Philipson. "What is your opinion?"

"I would first ask of you," said the Englishman, "what has been your part in this storming of a town occupied by the Duke's forces, and putting to death his governor?"

"So help me, Heaven!" said the Landamman, "as I knew not of any purpose of storming the town until it unexpectedly took place."

"And for the execution of De Hagenbach," said the black priest, "I swear to you, stranger, by my holy order, that it took place under the direction of a competent court, whose sentence Charles of Burgundy himself is bound to respect, and whose proceedings the deputies of the Swiss mission could neither have advanced nor retarded."

"If such be the case, and if you can really prove yourselves free of these proceedings," answered Philipson, "which must needs be highly resented by the Duke of Burgundy, I would advise you by all means to proceed upon your journey, with the certainty that you will obtain from

that prince a just and impartial hearing, and it may be a favorable answer. I know Charles of Burgundy—I may even say that, our different ranks and walks of life considered, I know him well. He will be deeply incensed by the first tidings of what has here chanced, which he will no doubt interpret to your disfavor. But if, in the course of investigation, you are able to clear yourselves of these foul imputations, a sense of his own injustice may perhaps turn the balance in your favor, and in that case he will rush from the excess of censure into that of indulgence. But your cause must be firmly stated to the Duke by some tongue better acquainted with the language of courts than yours; and such a friendly interpreter might I have proved to you, had I not been plundered of the valuable packet which I bore with me in order to present to the Duke, and in testimony of my commission to him."

"A paltry fetch," whispered Donnerhugel to the banneret, "that the trader may obtain from us satisfaction for the goods of which he has been plundered."

The Landamman himself was perhaps for a moment of the same opinion.

"Merchant," he said, "we hold ourselves bound to make good to you—that is, if our substance can effect it—whatever loss you may have sustained, trusting to our protection."

"Ay, that we will," said the old man of Schwytz, "should it cost us twenty zecchins to make it good."

"To your guarantee of immunity I can have no claim," said Philipson, "seeing I parted company with you before I sustained any loss. And I regret the loss not so much for its value, although that is greater than you may fancy, but chiefly because the contents of the casket I bore being a token betwixt a person of considerable importance and the Duke of Burgundy, I shall not, I fear, now that I am deprived of them, receive from his Grace that credence which I desire, both for my own sake and yours. Without them, and speaking only in the person of a private traveler, I may not take upon me as I might have done, when using the names of the persons whose mandates I carried."

"This important packet," said the Landamman, "shall be most rigorously sought for, and carefully redelivered to thee. For ourselves, not a Swiss of us knows the value of its contents; so that, if they are in the hands of any of our men, they will be returned, of course, as baubles, upon which they set no value."

As he spoke, there was a knocking at the door of the

chapel. Rudolph, who stood nearest to it, having held some communication with those without, observed, with a smile, which he instantly repressed, lest it had given offense to Arnold Biederman—" It is Sigismund, the good youth. Shall I admit him to our council?"

" To what purpose, poor simple lad?" said his father, with a sorrowful smile.

" Yet let me undo the door," said Philipson; he is anxious to enter, and perhaps he brings news. I have observed, Landamman, that the young man, though with slowness of ideas and expression, is strong in his principles, and sometimes happy in his conceptions."

He admitted Sigismund accordingly; while Arnold Biederman felt, on the one hand, the soothing compliment which Philipson had paid to a boy certainly the dullest of his family, and, on the other, feared some public display of his son's infirmity, or lack of understanding. Sigismund, however, seemed all confidence; and he certainly had reason to be so, since, as the shortest mode of explanation, he presented to Philipson the necklace of diamonds, with the casket in which it had been deposited.

" This pretty thing is yours," he said. " I understand so much from your son Arthur, who tells me you will be glad to have it again."

" Most cordially do I thank you," said the merchant. " The necklace is certainly mine—that is, the packet of which it formed the contents was under my charge; and it is at this moment of greater additional value to me than even its actual worth, since it serves as my pledge and token for the performance of an important mission. And how, my young friend," he continued, addressing Sigismund, " have you been so fortunate as to recover what we have sought for hitherto in vain? Let me return my best acknowledgments; and do not think me over-curious if I ask how it reached you?"

" For that matter," said Sigismund, the story is soon told. I had planted myself as near the scaffold as I could, having never beheld an execution before; and I observed the executioner, who, I thought, did his duty very cleverly, just in the moment that he spread a cloth over the body of De Hagenbach, snatch something from the dead man's bosom, and huddle it hastily into his own; so, when the rumor arose that an article of value was amissing, I hurried in quest of the fellow. I found he had bespoken masses to the extent of a hundred crowns at the high altar of St. Paul's; and I traced

him to the tavern of the village, where some ill-looking men were joyously drinking to him as a free citizen and a nobleman. So I stepped in amongst them with my partizan, and demanded of his lordship either to surrender to me what he had thus possessed himself of or to try the weight of the weapon I carried. His lordship, my Lord Hangman, hesitated, and was about to make a brawl. But I was something peremptory, and so he judged it best to give me the parcel, which I trust you, Signior Philipson, will find safe and entire as it was taken from you. And—and—I left them to conclude their festivities—and that is the whole of the story."

"Thou art a brave lad," said Philipson; "and with a heart always right, the head can seldom be far wrong. But the church shall not lose its dues, and I take it on myself, ere I leave La Ferette, to pay for the masses which the man had ordered for the sake of De Hagenbach's soul, snatched from the world so unexpectedly."

Sigismund was about to reply; but Philipson, fearing he might bring out some foolery to diminish the sense which his father had so joyously entertained of his late conduct, immediately added, "Hie away, my good youth, and give to my son Arthur this precious casket."

With simple exultation at receiving applause to which he was little accustomed, Sigismund took his leave, and the council were once more left to their own privacy.

There was a moment's silence; for the Landamman could not overcome the feeling of exquisite pleasure at the sagacity which poor Sigismund, whose general conduct warranted no such expectations, had displayed on the present occasion. It was not, however, a feeling to which circumstances permitted him to give vent, and he reserved it for his own secret enjoyment, as a solace to the anxiety which he had hitherto entertained concerning the limited intellect of this simple-minded young man. When he spoke, it was to Philipson, with the usual candor and manliness of his character.

"Signior Philipson," he said, "we will hold you bound by no offer which you made while these glittering matters were out of your possession; because a man may often think that, if he were in such and such a situation, he would be able to achieve certain ends, which, that position being attained, he may find himself unable to accomplish. But I now ask you whether, having thus fortunately and unexpectedly regained possession of what you say will give you certain credence with the Duke of Burgundy, you conceive yourself entitled to mediate with him on our behalf, as you formerly proposed?"

All bent forward to hear the merchant's answer.

"Landamman," he replied, "I never spoke the word in difficulty which I was not ready to redeem when that difficulty was removed. You say, and I believe, that you had no concern with this storming of La Ferette. You say also, that the life of De Hagenbach was taken by a judicature over which you had no control, and exercised none. Let a protocol be drawn up, averring these circumstances, and, as far as possible, proving them. Entrust it to me—under seal if you will—and if such points be established, I will pledge my word as a—as a— as an honest man and a true-born Englishman, that the Duke of Burgundy will neither detain nor offer you any personal injury. I also hope to show to Charles strong and weighty reasons why a league of friendship betwixt Burgundy and the United Cantons of Helvetia is, on his Grace's part, a wise and generous measure. But it is possible I may fail in this last point; and if I do, I shall deeply grieve for it. In warranting your safe passage to the Duke's court, and your safe return from it to your own country, I think I cannot fail. If I do, my own life, and that of my beloved and only child, shall pay the ransom for my excess of confidence in the Duke's justice and honor."

The other deputies stood silent and looked on the Landamman, but Rudolph Donnerhugel spoke.

"Are we then to trust our own lives, and, what is still dearer to us, that of our honored associate, Arnold Biederman, on the simple word of a foreign trader? We all know the temper of the Duke, and how vindictively and relentlessly he has ever felt towards our country and its interests. Methinks this English merchant should express the nature of his interest at the court of Burgundy more plainly, if he expects us to place such implicit reliance in it."

"That, Signior Rudolph Donnerhugel," replied the merchant, "I find myself not at liberty to do. I pry not into your secrets, whether they belong to you as a body or as individuals. My own are sacred. If I consulted my own safety merely, I should act most wisely to part company with you here. But the object of your mission is peace; and your sudden return, after what has chanced at La Ferette, will make war inevitable. I think I can assure you of a safe and free audience from the Duke, and I am willing, for the chance of securing the peace of Christendom, to encounter any personal peril which may attach to myself."

"Say no more, worthy Philipson," said the Landamman; "thy good faith is undoubted on our part, and ill-luck is

his who cannot read it written on thy manly forehead. We go forward, then, prepared to risk our own safety at the hand of a despotic prince, rather than leave undischarged the mission which our country has entrusted us with. He is but half a brave man who will risk his life only in the field of battle. There are other dangers to front which are equally honorable; and since the weal of Switzerland demands that we should encounter them, not one of us will hesitate to take the risk."

The other members of the mission bowed in assent, and the conclave broke up to prepare for their farther entrance into Burgundy.

CHAPTER XVII

Upon the mountain's heathery side,
The day's last luster shone,
And rich with many a radiant hue,
Gleam'd gaily on the Rhone.

SOUTHEY.

THE English merchant was now much consulted by the Swiss commissioners in all their motions. He exhorted them to proceed with all despatch on their journey, so as to carry to the Duke their own account of the affair of Brisach, and thus anticipate all rumors less favorable to their conduct on the occasion. For this purpose Philipson recommended that the deputies, dismissing their escort, whose arms and numbers might give umbrage and suspicion, while they were too few for defense, should themselves proceed by rapid journeys on horseback towards Dijon, or wherever the Duke chanced to be for the time.

This proposal was, however, formally resisted by the very person who had hitherto been the most ductile of the party, and the willing echo of the Landamman's pleasure. On the present occasion, notwithstanding that Arnold Biederman declared the advice of Philipson excellent, Nicholas Bonstetten stood in absolute and insurmountable opposition; because, having hitherto trusted to his own limbs for transporting himself to and fro on all occasions, he could by no means be persuaded to commit himself to the discretion of a horse. As he was found obstinately positive on this subject, it was finally determined that the two Englishmen should press forward on their journey with such speed as they might, and that the elder of them should make the Duke acquainted with so much as to the capture of La Ferette as he had himself witnessed of the matter. The particulars which had attended the death of De Hagenbach, the Landamman assured him, would be sent to the Duke by a person of confidence, whose attestation on the subject could not be doubted.

This course was adopted, as Philipson expressed his confidence of getting an early and private audience with his Grace of Burgundy.

"My best intercession," he said, "you have a good right to reckon upon; and no one can bear more direct testimony than I can to the ungovernable cruelty and rapacity of De Hagenbach, of which I had so nearly been the victim. But of his trial and execution I neither know nor can tell anything; and as Duke Charles is sure to demand why execution was done upon his officer without any appeal to his own tribunal, it will be well that you either provide me with such facts as you have to state, or send forward, at least, as speedily as possible, the evidence which you have to lay before him on the most weighty branch of the subject."

The proposal of the merchant created some visible embarrassment on the countenance of the Swiss, and it was with obvious hesitation that Arnold Biederman, having led him aside, addressed him in a whisper—

"My good friend," he said, "mysteries are in general like the hateful mists which disfigure the noblest features of nature; yet, like mists, they will sometimes intervene when we most desire their absence, when we most desire to be plain and explicit. The manner of De Hagenbach's death you saw; we will take care that the Duke is informed of the authority by which it was inflicted. This is all that I can at present tell you on the subject; and let me add, that the less you speak of it with any one, you will be the more likely to escape inconvenience."

"Worthy Landamman," said the Englishman, "I also am by nature, and from the habits of my country, a hater of mysteries. Yet, such is my firm confidence in your truth and honor, that you shall be my guide in these dark and secret transactions, even as amongst the mists and precipices of your native land, and I rest contented in either case to place unlimited confidence in your sagacity. Let me only recommend that your explanation with Charles be instant, as well as clear and candid. Such being the case, I trust my poor interest with the Duke may be reckoned for something in your favor. Here, then, we part, but, as I trust, soon to meet again."

The elder Philipson now rejoined his son, whom he directed to hire horses, together with a guide, to conduct them with all speed to the presence of the Duke of Burgundy. By various inquiries of the town, and especially among the soldiers of the slain De Hagenbach, they at length learned that Charles had been of late occupied in taking possession of Lorraine, and, being now suspicious of unfriendly dispositions on the part of the Emperor of Germany,

as well as of Sigismund Duke of Austria, had drawn a considerable part of his army together near Strasburg, in order to be prepared against any attempt of these princes, or of the Free Imperial Cities, which might interfere with his course of conquest. The Duke of Burgundy at this period well deserved his peculiar epithet of the Bold, since, surrounded by enemies, like one of the nobler animals of the chase, he yet astounded, by his stern and daring countenance, not only the princes and states we have mentioned, but even the King of France, equally powerful, and far more politic than himself.

To his camp, therefore, the English travelers bent their way, each full of such deep and melancholy reflection as, perhaps, prevented his bestowing much attention on the other's state of mind. They rode as men deeply immersed in their own thoughts, and with less intercourse than had been usual betwixt them on their former journeys. The nobleness of the elder Philipson's nature, and his respect for the Landamman's probity, joined with gratitude for his hospitality, had prevented him from separating his cause from that of the Swiss deputies, nor did he now repent his generosity in adhering to them. But when he recollected the nature and importance of the personal affairs which he himself had to despatch with a proud, imperious, and irritable prince, he could not but regret the circumstances which had involved his own particular mission, of so much consequence to himself and his friends, with that of persons likely to be so highly obnoxious to the Duke as Arnold Biederman and his companions; and, however grateful for the hospitality of Geierstein, he regretted, nevertheless, the circumstances which had obliged him to accept of it.

The thoughts of Arthur were no less anxious. He found himself anew separated from the object to which his thoughts were, almost against his own will, constantly returning. And this second separation had taken place after he had incurred an additional load of gratitude, and found new, as well as more mysterious, food for his ardent imagination. How was he to reconcile the character and attributes of Anne of Geierstein, whom he had known so gentle, candid, pure, and simple, with those of the [grand]daughter of a sage and of an elementary spirit, to whom night was as day, and an impervious dungeon the same as the open portico of a temple? Could they be identified as the same being? or, while strictly alike in shape and lineament, was the one a tenant of the earth, the other only a phantom, permitted to

show itself among those of a nature in which she did not partake? Above all, must he never see her more, or receive from her own lips an explanation of the mysteries which were so awfully entwined with his recollections of her? Such were the questions which occupied the mind of the younger traveler, and prevented him from interrupting, or even observing, the reverie in which his father was plunged.

Had either of the travelers been disposed to derive amusement from the country through which their road lay, the vicinity of the Rhine was well qualified to afford it. The ground on the left bank of that noble river is indeed rather flat and tame; and the mountains of Alsace, a ridge of which sweeps along its course, do not approach so near as greatly to vary the level surface of the valley which divides them from its shores. But the broad stream itself, hurrying forward with dizzy rapidity, and rushing around the islets by which its course is interrupted, is one of the most majestic spectacles in nature. The right bank is dignified at once and adorned by the numerous eminences, covered with wood and interspersed with valleys, which constitute the district so well known by the name of the Black Forest, to which superstition attached so many terrors and credulity such a variety of legends. Terrors, indeed, it had of a real and existing character. The old castles, seen from time to time on the banks of the river itself, or on the ravines and large brooks which flow into it, were then no picturesque ruins, rendered interesting by the stories which were told about their former inhabitants, but constituted the real and apparently impregnable strongholds of that robber-chivalry whom we have already frequently mentioned, and of whom, since Goethe, an author born to arouse the slumbering fame of his country, had dramatized the story of Goetz of Berlichingen,* we have had so many spirit-stirring tales. The danger attending the vicinity of these fortresses was only known on the right or German bank of the Rhine, for the breadth and depth of that noble stream effectually prevented any foray of their inhabitants from reaching Alsace. The former was in possession of the cities or free towns of the Empire, and thus the feudal tyranny of the German lords was chiefly exerted at the expense of their own countrymen, who, irritated and exhausted with their rapine and oppression, were compelled to erect barriers against it, of a nature

* This drama by Goethe, was translated by Sir Walter Scott, and was one of his earliest publications. (*Laing.*)

as interesting and extraordinary as were the wrongs from which they endeavored to protect themselves.

But the left bank of the river, over great part of which Charles of Burgundy exercised his authority, under various characters, was under the regular protection of the ordinary magistrates, who were supported in the discharge of their duty by large bands of mercenary soldiers. These were maintained by Charles out of his private revenue, he, as well as his rival Louis, and other princes of the period, having discovered that the feudal system gave an inconvenient degree of independence to their vassals, and thinking, of course, that it was better to substitute in its place a standing army, consisting of Free Companies, or soldiers by profession. Italy furnished most of these bands, which composed the strength of Charles's army, at least the part of it in which he was most trusted.

Our travelers, therefore, pursued their way by the banks of the river, in as great a degree of security as could well be enjoyed in that violent and distracted time, until at length the father, after having eyed for some time the person whom Arthur had hired to be their guide, suddenly asked of his son who or what the man was. Arthur replied, that he had been too eager to get a person who knew the road, and was willing to show it, to be very particular in inquiring into his station or occupation ; but that he thought, from the man's appearance, he must be one of those itinerant ecclesiastics who travel through the country with relics, pardons, and other religious trinkets, and were in general but slightly respected, excepting by the lower orders, on whom these venders of superstitious wares were often accused of practising gross deceptions.

The man's appearance was rather that of a lay devotee, or palmer, bound on his pilgrimage to different shrines, than of a mendicant friar or questionary. He wore the hat, scrip, staff, and coarse dalmatic, somewhat like the military cloak of the modern hussar, which were used by such persons on their religious peregrinations. St. Peter's keys, rudely shaped out of some scarlet rag of cloth, appeared on the back of his mantle, placed, as heralds say, saltire wise. This devotee seemed a man of fifty and upwards, well made, and stout for his age, with a cast of countenance which, though not positively ugly, was far from being well favored. There was shrewdness and an alert expression in his eye and actions, which made some occasional contrast with the sanctimonious demeanor of the character he now bore. This difference be-

twixt his dress and physiognomy was by no means uncommon among persons of his description, many of whom embraced this mode of life rather to indulge roving and idle habits than from any religious call.

"Who art thou, good fellow?" said the elder Philipson; "and by what name am I to call thee while we are fellow-travelers?"

"Bartholomew, sir," said the man—"Brother Bartholomew—I might say Bartholomæus, but it does not become a poor lay brother like me to aspire to the honor of a learned termination."

"And whither does thy journey tend, good Brother Bartholomew?"

"In whichever direction your worship chooses to travel, and to require my services as guide," answered the palmer; "always premising you allow me leisure for my devotions at such holy stations as we pass on our route."

"That is, thine own journey hath no professed or pressing object or end?" said the Englishman.

"None, as your worship says, peculiar," said the itinerant; "or I might rather say, that my journey, good sir, embraces so many objects, that it is matter of indifference to me which of them I accomplish first. My vow binds me for four years to travel from one shrine, or holy place, to another; but I am not directly tied to visit them by any precise rule of rotation."

"That is to say, thy vow of pilgrimage does not prevent thee from hiring thyself to wait upon travelers as their guide," replied Philipson.

"If I can unite the devotion I owe to the blessed saints whose shrines I visit with a service rendered to a wandering fellow-creature who desires to be directed upon his journey, I do maintain," replied Bartholomew, "that the objects are easily to be reconciled to each other."

"Especially as a little worldly profit may tend to cement the two duties together, if otherwise incompatible," said Philipson.

"It pleases your honor to say so," replied the pilgrim; "but you yourself may, if you will, derive from my good company something more than the mere knowledge of the road in which you propose to travel. I can make your journey more edifying by legends of the blessed saints whose holy relics I have visited, and pleasing, by the story of the wonderful things which I have seen and heard in my travels. I can impart to you an opportunity of providing yourself

with his Holiness's pardon, not only for the sins which you have committed, but also granting you indulgence for future errors."

"These things are highly available, doubtless," replied the merchant: "but, good Bartholomew, when I desire to speak of them, I apply to my father confessor, to whom I have been uniformly regular in committing the charge of my conscience, and who must be, therefore, well acquainted with my state of mind, and best accustomed to prescribe what its case may require."

"Nevertheless," said Bartholomew, "I trust your worship is too religious a man, and too sound a Catholic, to pass any hallowed station without endeavoring to obtain some share of the benefits which it is the means of dispensing to those who are ready and willing to deserve them; more especially as all men, of whatever trade and degree, hold respect to the holy saint who patronizeth his own mystery; so I hope you, being a merchant, will not pass the chapel of Our Lady of the Ferry without making some fitting orison."

"Friend Bartholomew," said Philipson, "I have not heard of the shrine which you recommend to me; and, as my business is pressing, it were better worth my while to make a pilgrimage hither on purpose to make mine homage at a fitter season than to delay my journey at present. This, God willing, I will not fail to do, so that I may be held excused for delaying my reverence till I can pay it more respectfully, and at greater leisure."

"May it please you not to be wroth," said the guide, "if I say that your behavior in this matter is like that of a fool, who, finding a treasure by the roadside, omits to put it in his bosom and carry it along with him, proposing to return from a distance on a future day, of express purpose to fetch it."

Philipson, something astonished at the man's pertinacity, was about to answer hastily and angrily, but was prevented by the arrival of three strangers, who rode hastily up from behind them.

The foremost of these was a young female, most elegantly attired, and mounted upon a Spanish jennet, which she reined with singular grace and dexterity. She wore on her right hand such a glove as that which was used to carry hawks, and had a merlin perched upon it. Her head was covered with a montero cap, and, as was frequently the custom at the period, she wore on her face a kind of black silk

vizard, which effectually concealed her features. Notwithstanding this disguise, Arthur Philipson's heart sprung high at the appearance of these strangers, for he was at once certain he recognized the matchless form of the Swiss maiden, by whom his mind was so anxiously occupied. Her attendants were a falconer with his hunting-pole and a female, both apparently her domestics. The elder Philipson, who had no such accuracy of recollection as his son manifested upon the occasion, saw in the fair stranger only some dame or damsel of eminence engaged in the amusement of hawking, and, in return to a brief salutation, merely asked her, with suitable courtesy, as the case demanded, whether she had spent the morning in good sport.

"Indifferent, good friend," said the lady. "I dare not fly my hawk so near the broad river, lest he should soar to the other side, and so I might lose my companion. But I reckon on finding better game when I have crossed to the other side of the ferry, which we are now approaching."

"Then your ladyship," said Bartholomew, "will hear mass in Hans's Chapel, and pray for your success?"

"I were a heathen to pass the holy place without doing so," replied the damsel.

"That, noble damsel, touches the point we were but now talking of," said the guide Bartholomew; "for know, fair mistress, that I cannot persuade this worthy gentleman how deeply the success of his enterprise is dependent upon his obtaining the blessing of Our Lady of the Ferry."

"The good man," said the young maiden, seriously, and even severely, "must know little of the Rhine. I will explain to the gentlemen the propriety of following your advice."

She then rode close to young Philipson, and spoke in Swiss, for she had hitherto used the German language—"Do not start, but hear me!" and the voice was that of Anne of Geierstein. "Do not, I say, be surprised or at least show not your wonder; you are beset by dangers. On this road, especially, your business is known—your lives are laid in wait for. Cross over the river at the Ferry of the Chapel, or Hans's Ferry, as it is usually termed."

Here the guide drew so near to them that it was impossible for her to continue the conversation without being overheard. At that same moment a woodcock sprung from some bushes, and the young lady threw off her merlin in pursuit.

"Sa ho—sa ho—wo ha!" hallooed the falconer, in a note which made the thicket ring again; and away he rode in pursuit. The elder Philipson and the guide himself followed

the chase eagerly with their eyes, so attractive was the love of that brave sport to men of all ranks. But the voice of the maiden was a lure which would have summoned Arthur's attention from matters more deeply interesting.

"Cross the Rhine," she again repeated, "at the ferry to Kirchhoff, on the other side of the river. Take your lodgings at the Golden Fleece, where you will find a guide to Strasburg. I must stay here no longer."

So saying, the damsel raised herself in her saddle, struck her horse lightly with the loose reins, and the mettled animal, already impatient at her delay and the eager burst of its companions, flew forward at such a pace as if he had meant to emulate the flight of the hawk and of the prey he pursued. The lady and her attendants soon vanished from the sight of the travelers.

A deep silence for some time ensued, during which Arthur studied how to communicate the warning he had received, without awakening the suspicions of their guide. But the old man broke silence himself, saying to Bartholomew, "Put your horse into more motion, I pray you, and ride onward a few yards; I would have some private conference with my son."

The guide obeyed, and, as if with the purpose of showing a mind too profoundly occupied by heavenly matters to admit a thought concerning those of this transitory world, he thundered forth a hymn in praise of St. Wendelin the shepherd, in a strain so discordant as startled every bird from every bush by which they passed. There was never a more unmelodious melody, whether sacred or profane, than that under protection of which the elder Philipson thus conferred with his son.

"Arthur," he said, "I am much convinced that this howling, hypocritical vagrant has some plot upon us; and I had well-nigh determined that the best mode to baffle it would be to consult my own opinion, and not his, as to our places of repose and the direction of our journey."

"Your judgment is correct, as usual," said his son. "I am well convinced of yonder man's treachery, from a whisper in which that maiden informed me that we ought to take the road to Strasburg by the eastern side of the river, and for that purpose cross over to a place called Kirchhoff, on the opposite bank."

"Do you advise this, Arthur?" replied his father.

"I will pledge my life for the faith of this young person," replied his son.

"What!" said his father, "because she sits her palfrey fairly, and shows a faultless shape? Such is the reasoning of a boy; and yet my old and cautious heart feels inclined to trust her. If our secret is known in this land, there are doubtless many who may me disposed to think they have an interest in barring my access to the Duke of Burgundy, even by the most violent means; and well you know that I should on my side hold my life equally cheap could I discharge mine errand at the price of lying it down. I tell thee, Arthur, that my mind reproaches me for taking hitherto over little care of ensuring the discharge of my commission, owing to the natural desire I had to keep thee in my company. There now lie before us two ways, both perilous and uncertain, by which we may reach the Duke's court. We may follow this guide and take the chance of his fidelity, or we may adopt the hint of yonder damsel-errant and cross over to the other side of the Rhine, and again repass the river at Strasburg. Both roads are perhaps equally perilous. I feel it my duty to diminish the risk of the miscarriage of my commission by sending thee across to the right bank, while I pursue my proposed course upon the left. Thus, if one of us be intercepted, the other may escape, and the important commission which he bears may be duly executed."

"Alas, my father!" said Arthur, "how is it possible for me to obey you, when by doing so I must leave you alone to incur so many dangers, to struggle with so many difficulties, in which my aid might be at least willing, though it could only be weak? Whatever befall us in these delicate and dangerous circumstances, let us at least meet it in company."

"Arthur, my beloved son," said his father, "in parting from thee I am splitting mine own heart in twain; but the same duty which commands us to expose our bodies to death as peremptorily orders us not to spare our most tender affections. We must part."

"Oh, then," replied his son, eagerly, "let me at least prevail in one point. Do thou, my father, cross the Rhine, and let me prosecute the journey by the route originally proposed."

"And why, I pray you," answered the merchant, "should I go one of these roads in preference to the other?"

"Because," said Arthur eagerly, "I would warrant yonder maiden's faith with my life."

"Again, young man?" said his father; "and wherefore so confident in that young maiden's faith? Is it merely

from the confidence which youth reposes in that which is fair and pleasing, or have you had farther acquaintance with her than the late brief conversation with her admitted?"

"Can I give you an answer?" replied his son. "We have been long absent from lands of knights and ladies, and is it not natural that we should give to those who remind us of the honored ties of chivalry and gentle blood the instinctive credence which we refuse to such a poor wretch as this itinerant mountebank, who gains his existence by cheating, with false relics and forged legends, the poor peasants amongst whom he travels?"

"It is a vain imagination, Arthur," said his father, "not unbefitting, indeed, an aspirant to the honors of chivalry, who draws his ideas of life and its occurrences from the romances of ministrels, but too visionary for a youth who has seen, as thou hast, how the business of this world is conducted. I tell thee, and thou wilt learn to know I say truth, that around the homely board of our host the Landamman were ranged truer tongues and more faithful hearts than the *cour plénière* of a monarch has to boast. Alas! the manly spirit of ancient faith and honor has fled even from the breasts of kings and knights, where, as John of France said, it ought to continue to reside a constant inhabitant, if banished from all the rest of the world."

"Be that as it may, dearest father," replied the younger Philipson, "I pray you to be persuaded by me; and if we must part company, let it be by your taking the right bank of the Rhine, since I am persuaded it is the safest route."

"And if it be the safest," said his father, with a voice of tender reproach, "is that a reason why I should spare my own almost exhausted thread of life, and expose thine, my dear son, which has but begun its course?"

"Nay, father," answered the son with animation, "in speaking thus you do not consider the difference of our importance to the execution of the purpose which you have so long entertained, and which seems now so nigh being accomplished. Think now imperfectly I might be able to discharge it, without knowledge of the Duke's person, or credentials to gain his confidence. I might indeed repeat your words, but the circumstances would be wanting to attract the necessary faith, and of consequence your scheme, for the success of which you have lived, and now are willing to run the risk of death, would miscarry along with me."

"You cannot shake my resolution," said the elder Philipson, "or persuade me that my life is of more importance than yours. You only remind me that it is you, and not I, who ought to be the bearer of this token to the Duke of Burgundy. Should you be successful in reaching his court or camp, your possession of these gems will be needful to attach credit to your mission—a purpose for which they would be less necessary to me, who can refer to other circumstances under which I might claim credence, if it should please Heaven to leave me alone to acquit myself of this important commission, which may Our Lady in her mercy forefend! Understand, therefore, that, should an opportunity occur by which you can make your way to the opposite side of the Rhine, you are to direct your journey so as again to cross to this bank at Strasburgh, where you will inquire for news of me at the Flying Stag, a hostelry in that city, which you will easily discover. If you hear no tidings of me at that place, you will proceed to the Duke, and deliver to him this important packet.

Here he put into his son's hand, with as much privacy as possible, the case containing the diamond necklace.

"What else your duty calls on you to do," continued the elder Philipson, "you well know; only, I conjure you, let no vain inquiries after my fate interfere with the great duty you have there to discharge. In the meantime, prepare to bid me a sudden farewell, with a heart as bold and confident as when you went before me, and courageously led the way, amid the rocks and storms of Switzerland. Heaven was above us then, as it is over us now. Adieu, my beloved Arthur! Should I wait till the moment of separation, there may be but short time to speak the fatal word, and no eye save thine own must see the tear which I now wipe away."

The painful feeling which accompanied this anticipation of their parting was so sincere on Arthur's part, as well as that of his father, that it did not at first occur to the former, as a source of consolation, that it seemed likely he might be placed under the guidance of the singular female the memory of whom haunted him. True it was, that the beauty of Anne of Geierstein, as well as the striking circumstances in which she had exhibited herself, had on that very morning been the principal occupation of his mind; but they were now chased from it by the predominant recollection that he was about to be separated in a moment of danger from a father so well deserving of his highest esteem and his fondest affection.

Meanwhile, that father dashed from his eye the tear which his devoted stoicism could not suppress, and, as if afraid of softening his resolution by indulging his parental fondness, he recalled the pious Bartholomew, to demand of him how far they were from the Chapel of the Ferry.

"Little more than a mile," was the reply ; and when the Englishman required further information concerning the cause of its erection, he was informed that an old boatman and fisherman named Hans had long dwelt at the place, who gained a precarious livelihood by transporting travelers and merchants from one bank of the river to the other. The misfortune, however, of losing first one boat and then a second in the deep and mighty stream, with the dread inspired in travelers by the repetition of such accidents, began to render his profession an uncertain one. Being a good Catholic, the old man's distress took a devotional turn. He began to look back on his former life, and consider by what crimes he had deserved the misfortunes which darkened the evening of his days. His remorse was chiefly excited by the recollection that he had, on one occasion, when the passage was peculiarly stormy, refused to discharge his duty as a ferryman in order to transport to the other shore a priest who bore along with him an image of the Virgin, destined for the village of Kirchhoff on the opposite or right bank of the Rhine. For this fault, Hans submitted to severe penance, as he was now disposed to consider as culpable his doubt of the Virgin's power of protecting herself, her priest, and the bark employed in her service ; besides which, the offering of a large share of his worldly goods to the church of Kirchhoff expressed the truth of the old man's repentance. Neither did he ever again permit himself to interpose any delay in the journey of men of Holy Church ; but all ranks of the clergy, from the mitered prelate to the barefooted friar, might at any time of day or night have commanded the services of him and his boat.

While prosecuting so laudable a course of life, it became at length the lot of Hans to find, on the banks of the Rhine, a small image of the Virgin thrown by the waves, which appeared to him exactly to resemble that which he had formerly ungraciously refused to carry across, when under charge of the sacristan of Kirchhoff. He placed it in the most conspicuous part of his hut, and poured out his soul before it in devotion, anxiously inquiring for some signal by which he might discover whether he was to consider the arrival of her holy image as a pledge that his offenses were

forgiven. In the visions of the night his prayers were answered, and Our Lady, assuming the form of the image, stood by his bedside, for the purpose of telling him wherefore she had come hither.

"My trusty servant," she said, "men of Belial have burned my dwelling at Kirchhoff, spoiled my chapel, and thrown the sacred image which represents me into the swollen Rhine, which swept me downward [upward]. Now, I have resolved to dwell no longer in the neighborhood of the profane doers of this deed, or of the cowardly vassals who dared not prevent it. I am, therefore, compelled to remove my habitation, and, in despite of the opposing current, I determined to take the shore on this side, being resolved to fix my abode with thee, my faithful servant, that the land in which thou dwellest may be blessed, as well as thou and thy household."

As the vision spoke, she seemed to wring from her tresses the water in which they had been steeped, while her disordered dress and fatigued appearance was that of one who has been buffeting with the waves.

Next morning brought intelligence that, in one of the numerous feuds of that fierce period, Kirchhoff had been sacked, the church destroyed, and the church treasury plundered.

In consequence of the fisherman's vision being thus remarkably confirmed, Hans entirely renounced his profession: and, leaving it to younger men to supply his place as ferryman, he converted his hut into a rustic chapel, and he himself, taking orders, attended upon the shrine as a hermit, or daily chaplain. The figure was supposed to work miracles, and the ferry became renowned from its being under the protection of the holy image of Our Lady, and her no less holy servant.

When Bartholomew had concluded his account of the ferry and its chapel, the travelers had arrived at the place itself.

CHAPTER XVIII

Upon the Rhine, upon the Rhine they cluster,
The grapes of juice divine,
Which make the soldier's jovial courage muster ;
O, blessed be the Rhine !

*Drinking Song.**

A COTTAGE or two on the side of the river, beside which were moored one or two fishing-boats showed the pious Hans had successors in his profession as a boatman. The river, which at a point a little lower was restrained by a chain of islets, expanded more widely and moved less rapidly than when it passed these cottages, affording to the ferryman a smoother surface and a less heavy stream to contend with, although the current was even there too strong to be borne up against, unless the river was in a tranquil state.

On the opposite bank, but a good deal lower than the hamlet which gave name to the ferry, was seated on a small eminence, screened by trees and bushes, the little town of Kirchhoff. A skiff departing from the left bank was, even on favorable occasions, carried considerably to leeward ere it could attain the opposite side of the deep and full stream of the Rhine, so that its course was oblique towards Kirchhoff. On the other hand, a boat departing from Kirchhoff must have great advantage, both of wind and oars, in order to land its loading or crew at the Chapel of the Ferry, unless it were under the miraculous influence which carried the image of the Virgin in that direction. The communication, therefore, from the east to the west bank was only maintained by towing boats up the stream to such a height on the eastern side that the leeway which they made during the voyage across might correspond with the point at which they desired to arrive, and enable them to attain it with ease. Hence, it naturally happened that, the passage from Alsace into Swabia being the most easy, the ferry was more used by those who were desirous of entering Germany than by travelers who came in an opposite direction.

When the elder Philipson had by a glance around him ascertained the situation of the ferry, he said firmly to his

* See " Der Rhein, der Rhein." Note 5.

son, "Begone, my dear Arthur, and do what I have commanded thee."

With a heart rent with filial anxiety, the young man obeyed, and took his solitary course towards the cottages, near which the barks were moored, which were occasionally used for fishing as well as for the purpose of the ferry.

"Your son leaves us?" said Bartholomew to the elder Philipson.

"He does for the present," said his father, "as he has certain inquiries to make in yonder hamlet."

"If they be," answered the guide, "any matters connected with your honor's road, I laud the saints that I can better answer your inquiries than those ignorant boors, who hardly understand your language."

"If we find that their information needs thy commentary," said Philipson, "we will request it; meanwhile, lead on to the chapel, where my son will join us."

They moved towards the chapel, but with slow steps, each turning his looks aside to the fishing hamlet; the guide as if striving to see whether the younger traveler was returning towards them; the father, anxious to descry, on the broad bosom of the Rhine, a sail unloosed, to waft his son across to that which might be considered as the safer side. But, though the looks of both guide and traveler were turned in the direction of the river, their steps carried them towards the chapel, to which the inhabitants, in memory of the founder, had given the title of Hans Chapelle.

A few trees scattered around gave an agreeable and silvan air to the place; and the chapel, that appeared on a rising ground at some distance from the hamlet, was constructed in a style of pleasing simplicity, which corresponded with the whole scene. Its small size confirmed the tradition that it had originally been merely the hut of a peasant; and the cross of fir-trees, covered with bark, attested the purpose to which it was now dedicated. The chapel and all around it breathed peace and solemn tranquillity, and the deep sound of the mighty river seemed to impose silence on each human voice which might presume to mingle with its awful murmur.

When Philipson arrived in the vicinity, Bartholomew took the advantage afforded by his silence to thunder forth two stanzas to the praise of the Lady of the Ferry and her faithful worshiper Hans, after which he broke forth into the rapturous exclamation—"Come hither ye who fear wrecks, here is your safe haven! Come hither, ye who die

of thirst, here is a well of mercy open to you! Come those who are weary and far-traveled, this is your place of refreshment! And more to the same purpose he might have said, but Philipson sternly imposed silence on him.

"If thy devotion were altogether true," he said, "it would be less clamorous; but it is well to do what is good in itself, even if it is a hypocrite who recommends it. Let us enter this holy chapel and pray for a fortunate issue to our precarious travels."

The pardoner caught up the last words.

"Sure was I," he said, "that your worship is too well advised to pass this holy place without imploring the protection and influence of Our Lady of the Ferry. Tarry but a moment until I find the priest who serves the altar, that he may say a mass on your behalf."

Here he was interrupted by the door of the chapel suddenly opening, when an ecclesiastic appeared on the threshold. Philipson instantly knew the priest of St. Paul's, whom he had seen that morning at La Ferette. Bartholomew also knew him, as it would seem; for his officious, hypocritical eloquence failed him in an instant, and he stood before the priest with his arms folded on his breast, like a man who waits for the sentence of condemnation.

"Villain," said the ecclesiastic, regarding the guide with a severe countenance, "dost thou lead a stranger into the houses of the holy saints, that thou mayest slay him and possess thyself of his spoils? But Heaven will no longer bear with thy perfidy. Back, thou wretch, to meet thy brother miscreants, who are hastening hitherward. Tell them thy arts were unavailing, and that the innocent stranger is under MY protection—under my protection, which those who presume to violate will meet with the reward of Archibald de Hagenbach!"

The guide stood quite motionless, while addressed by the priest in a manner equally menacing and authoritative; and no sooner did the latter cease speaking than, without offering a word either in justification or reply, Bartholomew turned round and retreated at a hasty pace by the same road which had conducted the traveler to the chapel.

"And do you, worthy Englishman," continued the priest, "enter into this chapel, and perform in safety those devotions by means of which yonder hypocrite designed to detain you until his brethren in iniquity came up. But first, wherefore are you alone? I trust nought evil hath befallen your young companion?"

"My son," said Philipson, "crosses the Rhine at yonder ferry, as we had important business to transact on the other side."

As he spoke thus, a light boat, about which two or three peasants had been for some time busy, was seen to push from the shore, and shoot into the stream, to which it was partly compelled to give way, until a sail stretched along the slender yard, and, supporting the bark against the current, enabled her to stand obliquely across the river.

"Now, praise be to God!" said Philipson, who was aware that the bark he looked upon must be in the act of carrying his son beyond the reach of the dangers by which he was himself surrounded.

"Amen!" answered the priest, echoing the pious ejaculation of the traveler. "Great reason have you to return thanks to Heaven."

"Of that I am convinced," replied Philipson; "but yet from you I hope to learn the special cause of danger from which I have escaped."

"This is neither time nor place for such an investigation," answered the priest of St. Paul's. "It is enough to say, that yonder fellow, well known for his hypocrisy and his crimes, was present when the young Switzer, Sigismund, reclaimed from the executioner the treasure of which you were robbed by Hagenbach. Thus Bartholomew's avarice was awakened. He undertook to be your guide to Strasburg, with the criminal intent of detaining you by the way till a party came up, against whose numbers resistance would have been in vain. But his purpose has been anticipated. And now, ere giving vent to other worldly thoughts, whether of hope or fear, to the chapel, sir, and join in orisons to Him who hath been your aid, and to those who have interceded with Him in your behalf."

Philipson entered the chapel with his guide, and joined in returning thanks to Heaven, and the tutelary power of the spot, for the escape which had been vouchsafed to him.

When this duty had been performed, Philipson intimated his purpose of resuming his journey, to which the black priest replied that, far from delaying him in a place so dangerous, he would himself accompany him for some part of the journey, since he also was bound to the presence of the Duke of Burgundy."

"You, my father—you!" said the merchant, with some astonishment.

"And wherefore surprised?" answered the priest. "Is it

so strange that one of my order should visit a prince's court? Believe me, there are but too many of them to be found there."

"I do not speak with reference to your order," answered Philipson, "but in regard of the part which you have this day acted, in abetting the execution of Archibald de Hagenbach. Know you so little of the fiery Duke of Burgundy, as to imagine you can dally with his resentment with more safety than you would pull the mane of a sleeping lion?"

"I know his mood well," said the priest; "and it is not to excuse but to defend the death of De Hagenbach that I go to his presence. The Duke may execute his serfs and bondsmen at his pleasure, but there is a spell upon my life which is proof to all his power. But let me retort the question. You, sir Englishman, knowing the conditions of the Duke so well—you, so lately the guest and traveling companion of the most unwelcome visitors who could approach him—you, implicated, in appearance at least, in the uproar at La Ferette—what chance is there of your escaping his vengeance? and wherefore will you throw yourself wantonly within his power?"

"Worthy father," said the merchant, "let each of us, without offense to the other, keep his own secret. I have, indeed, no spell to secure me from the Duke's resentment; I have limbs to suffer torture and imprisonment, and property which may be seized and confiscated. But I have had in former days many dealings with the Duke, I may even say I have laid him under obligations, and hope my interest with him may in consequence be sufficient not only to save me from the consequences of this day's procedure, but be of some avail to my friend the Landamman."

"But if you are in reality bound to the court of Burgundy as a merchant," said the priest, "where are the wares in which you traffic? Have you no merchandise save that which you carry on your person? I heard of a sumpter-horse with baggage. Has yonder villain deprived you of it?"

This was a trying question to Philipson, who, anxious about the separation from his son, had given no direction whether the baggage should remain with himself or should be transported to the other side of the Rhine. He was, therefore, taken at advantage by the priest s inquiry, to which he answered with some incoherence—"I believe my baggage is in the hamlet—that is, unless my son has taken it across the Rhine with him."

"That we will soon learn," answered the priest.

Here a novice appeared from the vestiary of the chapel at his call, and received commands to inquire at the hamlet whether Philipson's bales, with the horse which transported them, had been left there or ferried over along with his son.

The novice, being absent a few minutes, presently returned with the baggage-horse, which, with its burden, Arthur, from regard to his father's accommodation, had left on the western side of the river. The priest looked on attentively, while the elder Philipson, mounting his own horse. and taking the rein of the other in his hand, bade the black priest adieu in these words—"And now, father, farewell! I must pass on with my bales, since there is little wisdom in traveling with them after nightfall, else would I gladly suit my pace, with your permission; so as to share the way with you."

"If it is your obliging purpose to do so, as, indeed, I was about to propose," said the priest, "know I will be no stay to your journey. I have here a good horse; and Melchior, who must otherwise have gone on foot, may ride upon your sumpter-horse. I the rather propose this course, as it will be rash for you to travel by night. I can conduct you to an hostelry about five miles off, which we may reach with sufficient daylight, and where you will be lodged safely for your reckoning."

The English merchant hesitated a moment. He had no fancy for any new companion on the road, and although the countenance of the priest was rather handsome, considering his years, yet the expression was such as by no means invited confidence. On the contrary, there was something mysterious and gloomy which clouded his brow, though it was a lofty one, and a similar expression gleamed in his cold gray eye, and intimated severity, and even harshness, of disposition. But, notwithstanding this repulsive circumstance, the priest had lately rendered Philipson a considerable service, by detecting the treachery of his hypocritical guide, and the merchant was not a man to be startled from his course by any imaginary prepossessions against the looks or manners of any one, or apprehensions of machinations against himself. He only revolved in his mind the singularity attending his destiny, which, while it was necessary for him to appear before the Duke of Burgundy in the most conciliatory manner, seemed to force upon him the adoption of companions who must needs be obnoxious to that prince; and such, he was too well aware, must be the case with the priest of St. Paul's. Having reflected for an instant, he courteously

accepted the offer of the priest to guide him to some place of rest and entertainment, which must be absolutely necessary for his horse before he reached Strasburg, even if he himself could have dispensed with it.

The party being thus arranged, the novice brought forth the priest's steed, which he mounted with grace and agility, and the neophyte, being probably the same whom Arthur had represented during his escape from La Ferette, took charge, at his master's command, of the baggage-horse of the Englishman ; and crossing himself, with a humble inclination of his head, as the priest passed him, he fell into the rear, and seemed to pass the time, like the false brother Bartholomew, in telling his beads, with an earnestness which had perhaps more of affected than of real piety. The black priest of St. Paul's, to judge by the glance which he cast upon his novice, seemed to disdain the formality of the young man's devotion. He rode upon a strong black horse, more like a warrior's charger than the ambling palfrey of a priest, and the manner in which he managed him was entirely devoid of awkwardness and timidity. His pride, whatever was its character, was not certainly of a kind altogether professional, but had its origin in other swelling thoughts which arose in his mind, to mingle with and enhance the self-consequence of a powerful ecclesiastic.

As Philipson looked on his companion from time to time, his scrutinizing glance was returned by a haughty smile, which seemed to say, "You may gaze on my form and features, but you cannot penetrate my mystery."

The looks of Philipson, which were never known to sink before mortal man, seemed to retort, with equal haughtiness, "Nor shall you, proud priest, know that you are now in company with one whose secret is far more important than thine own can be."

At length the priest made some advance towards conversation, by allusion to the footing upon which, by a mutual understanding, they seemed to have placed their intercourse.

"We travel then," he said, "like two powerful enchanters, each conscious of his own high and secret purpose, each in his own chariot of clouds, and neither imparting to his companion the direction or purpose of his journey."

"Excuse me, father," answered Philipson ; "I have neither asked your purpose nor concealed my own, so far as it concerns you. I repeat, I am bound to the presence of the Duke of Burgundy, and my object, like that of any other merchant, is to dispose of my wares to advantage."

"Doubtless, it would seem so," said the black priest, "from the extreme attention to your merchandise which you showed not above half an hour since, when you knew not whether your bales had crossed the river with your son or were remaining in your own charge. Are English merchants usually so indifferent to the sources of their traffic?"

"When their lives are in danger," said Philipson, "they are sometimes negligent of their fortune."

"It is well," replied the priest, and again resumed his solitary musings, until another half-hour's traveling brought them to a *dorff*, or village, which the black priest informed Philipson was that where he proposed to stop for the night.

"The novice," he said, "will show you the inn, which is of good reputation, and where you may lodge with safety. For me, I have to visit a penitent in this village, who desires my ghostly offices; perhaps I may see you again this evening, perhaps not till the next morning; at any rate, adieu for the present."

So saying, the priest stopped his horse, while the novice, coming close up to Philipson's side, conducted him onward through the narrow street of the village, whilst the windows exhibited here and there a twinkling gleam, announcing that the hour of darkness was arrived. Finally, he led the Englishman through an archway into a sort of courtyard, where there stood a car or two of a particular shape, used occasionally by women when they travel, and some other vehicles of the same kind. Here the young man threw himself from the sumpter-horse, and, placing the rein in Philipson's hand, disappeared in the increasing darkness, after pointing to a large but dilapidated building, along the front of which not a spark of light was to be discovered from any of the narrow and numerous windows which were dimly visible in the twilight.

CHAPTER XIX

1st Carrier. What, ostler !—a plague on thee, hast never an eye in thy head ? Canst thou not hear ? An 'twere not as good a deed as drink to break the pate of thee, I am a very villain. Come, and be hanged. Hast thou no faith in thee ?

Gadshill. I pray thee, lend me thy lantern, to see my gelding in the stable.

2d Carrier. Nay, soft, I pray you—I know a trick worth two of that.

Gadshill. I prithee lend me thine.

3d Carrier. Ay, when ? Canst tell ? Lend thee my lantern, quotha ? Marry, I'll see thee hanged first.

Henry IV.

THE social spirit peculiar to the French nation had already introduced into the inns of that country the gay and cheerful character of welcome upon which Erasmus, at a later period, dwells with strong emphasis, as a contrast to the saturnine and sullen reception which strangers were apt to meet with at a German caravansera. Philipson was, therefore, in expectation of being received by the busy, civil, and talkative host—by the hostess and her daughter, all softness, coquetry, and glee—the smiling and supple waiter—the officious and dimpled chambermaid. The better inns in France boast also separate rooms, where strangers could change or put in order their dress, where they might sleep without company in their bedrooms, and where they could deposit their baggage in privacy and safety. But all these luxuries were as yet unknown in Germany ; and in Alsace, where the scene now lies, as well as in the other dependencies of the Empire, they regarded as effeminacy everything beyond such provisions as were absolutely necessary for the supply of the wants of travelers ; and even these were coarse and indifferent, and, excepting in the article of wine, sparingly ministered.

The Englishman, finding that no one appeared at the gate, began to make his presence known by calling aloud, and finally by alighting, and smiting with all his might on the doors of the hostelry for a long time, without attracting the least attention. At length the head of a grizzled servitor was thrust out at a small window, who, in a voice which

sounded like that of one displeased at the interruption, rather than hopeful of advantage from the arrival of a guest, demanded what he wanted.

"Is this an inn?" replied Philipson.

"Yes," bluntly replied the domestic, and was about to withdraw from the window, when the traveler added—

"And if it be, can I have lodgings?"

"You may come in," was the short and dry answer.

"Send some one to take the horses," replied Philipson.

"No one is at leisure," replied this most repulsive of waiters; "you must litter down your horses yourself, in the way that likes you best."

"Where is the stable?" said the merchant, whose prudence and temper were scarce proof against this Dutch phlegm.

The fellow, who seemed as sparing of his words as if, like the princess in the fairy tale, he had dropped ducats with each of them, only pointed to a door in an outer building, more resembling that of a cellar than of a stable, and, as if weary of the conference, drew in his head, and shut the window sharply against the guest, as he would against an importunate begger.

Cursing the spirit of independence which left a traveler to his own resources and exertions, Philipson, making a virtue of necessity, led the two nags towards the door pointed out as that of the stable, and was rejoiced at heart to see light glimmering through its chinks. He entered with his charge into a place very like the dungeon vault of an ancient castle, rudely fitted up with some racks and mangers. It was of considerable extent in point of length, and at the lower end two or three persons were engaged in tying up their horses, dressing them, and dispensing them their provender.

This last article was delivered by the ostler, a very old lame man, who neither put his hand to wisp or curry-comb, but sat weighing forth hay by the pound, and counting out corn, as it seemed, by the grain, so anxiously did he bend over his task, by the aid of a blinking light inclosed within a horn lantern. He did not even turn his head at the noise which the Englishman made on entering the place with two additional horses, far less did he seem disposed to give himself the least trouble, or the stranger the smallest assistance.

In respect of cleanliness, the stable of Augeas bore no small resemblance to that of this Alsatian *dorff*, and it would have been an exploit worthy of Hercules to have restored it to such a state of cleanliness as would have made

it barely decent in the eyes, and tolerable to the nostrils of the punctilious Englishman. But this was a matter which disgusted Philipson himself much more than those of his party which were principally concerned. They, *videlicet* the two horses, seeming perfectly to understand that the rule of the place was "first come, first served," hastened to occupy the empty stalls which happened to be nearest to them. In this one of them at least was disappointed, being received by a groom with a blow across the face with a switch.

"Take that," said the fellow, "for forcing thyself into the place taken up for the horses of the Baron of Randelsheim."

Never in the course of his life had the English merchant more pain to retain possession of his temper than at that moment. Reflecting, however, on the discredit of quarreling with such a man in such a cause, he contented himself with placing the animal, thus repulsed from the stall he had chosen, into one next to that of his companion, to which no one seemed to lay claim.

The merchant then proceeded, notwithstanding the fatigue of the day, to pay all that attention to the mute companions of his journey which they deserve from every traveler who has any share of prudence, to say nothing of humanity. The unusual degree of trouble which Philipson took to arrange his horses, although his dress, and much more his demeanor, seemed to place him above this species of servile labor, appeared to make an impression even upon the iron insensibility of the old ostler himself. He showed some alacrity in furnishing the traveler, who knew the business of a groom so well, with corn, straw, and hay, though in small quantity, and at exorbitant rates, which were instantly to be paid; nay, he even went as far as the door of the stable, that he might point across the court to the well, from which Philipson was obliged to fetch water with his own hands. The duties of the stable being finished, the merchant concluded that he had gained such an interest with the grim master of the horse as to learn of him whether he might have his bales safely in the stable.

"You may leave them if you will," said the ostler; "but touching their safety you will do much more wisely if you take them with you, and give no temptation to any one by suffering them to pass from under your own eyes."

So saying, the man of oats closed his oracular jaws, nor could he be prevailed upon to unlock them again by any inquiry which his customer could devise.

In the course of this cold and comfortless reception, Philipson recollected the necessity of supporting the character of a prudent and wary trader, which he had forgotten once before in the course of the day; and, imitating what he saw the others do, who had been, like himself, engaged in taking charge of their horses, he took up his baggage and removed himself and his property to the inn. Here he was suffered to enter, rather than admitted, into the general or public *stube,* or room of entertainment, which like the ark of the patriarch, received all ranks without distinction, whether clean or unclean.

The *stube* of a German inn derived its name from the great hypocaust, or stove, which is always strongly heated to secure the warmth of the apartment in which it is placed. There travelers of every age and description assembled; there their upper garments were indiscriminately hung up around the stove to dry or to air; and the guests themselves were seen employed in various acts of ablution or personal arrangement, which are generally, in modern times, referred to the privacy of the dressing-room.

The more refined feelings of the Englishman were disgusted with this scene, and he was reluctant to mingle in it. For this reason he inquired for the private retreat of the landlord himself, trusting that, by some of the arguments powerful among his tribe, he might obtain separate quarters from the crowd, and a morsel of food to be eaten in private. A gray-haired Ganymede, to whom he put the question where the landlord was, indicated a recess behind the huge stove, where, veiling his glory in a very dark and extremely hot corner, it pleased the great man to obscure himself from the vulgar gaze. There was something remarkable about his person. Short, stout, bandy-legged, and consequential, he was in these respects like many brethren of the profession in all countries. But the countenance of the man, and still more his manners, differed more from the merry host of France or England than even the experienced Philipson was prepared to expect. He knew German customs too well to expect the suppliant and serviceable qualities of the master of a French inn, or even the more blunt and frank manners of an English landlord. But such German innkeepers as he had yet seen, though indeed arbitrary and peremptory in their country fashions, yet, being humored in these, they, like tyrants in their hours of relaxation, dealt kindly with the guests over whom their sway extended, and mitigated, by jest and jollity, the harshness of their absolute power. But

"The general, or public *stubé*, or room of public entertainment."

this man's brow was like a tragic volume, in which you were as unlikely to find anything of jest or amusement as in a hermit's breviary. His answers were short, sudden [sullen], and repulsive, and the air and manner with which they were delivered was as surly as their tenor, which will appear from the following dialogue betwixt him and his guest :—

"Good host," said Philipson, in the mildest tone he could assume, "I am fatigued, and far from well—may I request to have a separate apartment, a cup of wine, and a morsel of food in my private chamber ?"

"You may," answered the landlord, but with a look strangely at variance with the apparent acquiescence which his words naturally implied.

"Let me have such accommodation, then, with your earliest convenience."

"Soft !" replied the innkeeper. "I have said that you may request these things, but not that I would grant them. If you would insist on being served differently from others, it must be at another inn than mine."

"Well, then," said the traveler, "I will shift without supper for a night—nay, more, I will be content to pay for a supper which I do not eat—if you will cause me to be accommodated with a private apartment ?"

"Signior traveler," said the innkeeper, "every one here must be accommodated as well as you, since all pay alike. Whoso comes to this house of entertainment must eat as others eat, drink as others drink, sit at table with the rest of my guests, and go to bed when the company have done drinking."

"All this," said Philipson, humbling himself where anger would have been ridiculous, "is highly reasonable ; and I do not oppose myself to your laws or customs. But," added he, taking his purse from his girdle, "sickness craves some privilege ; and then the patient is willing to pay for it, methinks the rigor of your laws may admit of some mitigation ?"

"I keep an inn, signior, and not an hospital. If you remain here, you shall be served with the same attention as others ; if you are not willing to do as others do, leave my house and seek another inn."

On receiving this decisive rebuff, Philipson gave up the contest, and retired from the *sanctum sanctorum* of his ungracious host, to await the arrival of supper, penned up like a bullock in a pound, amongst the crowded inhabitants of the *stube*. Some of these, exhausted by fatigue, snored away the interval between their own arrival and that of the

expected repast; others conversed together on the news of the country; and others again played at dice, or such games as might serve to consume the time. The company were of various ranks, from those who were apparently wealthy and well-appointed to some whose garments and manners indicated that they were but just beyond the grasp of poverty.

A begging friar, a man apparently of a gay and pleasant temper, approached Philipson, and engaged him in conversation. The Englishman was well enough acquainted with the world to be aware that whatever of his character and purpose it was desirable to conceal would be best hidden under a sociable and open demeanor. He, therefore, received the friar's approaches graciously, and conversed with him upon the state of Lorraine, and the interest which the Duke of Burgundy's attempt to seize that fief into his own hands was likely to create both in France and Germany. On these subjects, satisfied with hearing his fellow-traveler's sentiments, Philipson expressed no opinion of his own, but, after receiving such intelligence as the friar chose to communicate, preferred rather to talk upon the geography of the country, the facilities afforded to commerce, and the rules which obstructed or favored trade.

While he was thus engaged in the conversation which seemed most to belong to his profession, the landlord suddenly entered the room, and, mounting on the head of an old barrel, glanced his eye slowly and steadily round the crowded apartment, and when he had completed his survey, pronounced in a decisive tone the double command—"Shut the gates. Spread the table."

"The Baron St. Antonio be praised," said the friar, "our lordlord has given up hope of any more guests to-night, until which blessed time we might have starved for want of food before he had relieved us. Ay, here comes the cloth; the old gates of the courtyard are now bolted fast enough and when Jan Mengs has once said, 'Shut the gates,' the stranger may knock on the outside as he will, but we may rest assured that it shall not be opened to him."

"Meinherr Mengs maintains strict discipline in his house," said the Englishman.

"As absolute as the Duke of Burgundy," answered the friar. "After ten o'clock, no admittance: the 'seek another inn,' which is before that a conditional hint, becomes, after the clock has struck and the watchmen have begun their rounds, an absolute order of exclusion. He that is without remains without, and he that is within must,

in like manner, continue there until the gates open at break of day. Till then the house is almost like a beleaguered citadel, John Mengs its seneschal——"

"And we its captives, good father," said Philipson. "Well, content am I; a wise traveler must submit to the control of the leaders of the people when he travels, and I hope a goodly fat potentate like John Mengs will be as clement as his station and dignity admit of."

While they were talking in this manner, the aged waiter, with many a weary sigh and many a groan, had drawn out certain boards by which a table that stood in the midst of the *stube* had the capacity of being extended, so as to contain the company present, and covered it with a cloth, which was neither distinguished by extreme cleanliness nor fineness of texture. On this table, when it had been accommodated to receive the necessary number of guests, a wooden trencher and spoon, together with a glass drinking-cup, were placed before each, he being expected to serve himself with his own knife for the other purposes of the table. As for forks, they were unknown until a much later period, all the Europeans of that day making the same use of the fingers to select their morsels and transport them to the mouth which the Asiatics now practise.

The board was no sooner arranged than the hungry guests hastened to occupy their seats around it; for which purpose the sleepers were awakened, the dicers resigned their game, and the idlers and politicians broke off their sage debates, in order to secure their station at the supper-table, and be ready to perform their part in the interesting solemnity which seemed about to take place. But there is much between the cup and the lip, and not less sometimes between the covering of a table and the placing food upon it. The guests sat in order, each with his knife drawn, already menacing the victuals which were still subject to the operations of the cook. They had waited with various degrees of patience for full half an hour, when at length the old attendant before mentioned entered with a pitcher of thin Moselle wine, so light and so sharp tasted, that Philipson put down his cup with every tooth in his head set on edge by the slender portion which he had swallowed. The landlord, John Mengs, who had assumed a seat somewhat elevated at the head of the table, did not omit to observe this mark of insubordination, and to animadvert upon it.

"The wine likes you not, I think, my master?" said he to the English merchant.

"For wine, no," answered Philipson; "but could I see anything requiring such sauce, I have seldom seen better vinegar."

This jest, though uttered in the most calm and composed manner, seemed to drive the innkeeper to fury.

"Who are you," he exclaimed, "for a foreign peddler, that ventures to quarrel with my wine, which has been approved of by so many princes, dukes, reigning dukes, graves, rhinegraves, counts, barons, and knights of the Empire, whose shoes you are altogether unworthy even to clean? Was it not of this wine that the Count Palatine of Nimmersatt drank six quarts before he ever rose from the blessed chair in which I now sit?"

"I doubt it not, mine host," said Philipson; "nor should I think of scandalizing the sobriety of your honorable guest, even if he had drunken twice the quantity."

"Silence, thou malicious railer!" said the host; "and let instant apology be made to me and the wine which you have calumniated, or I will instantly command the supper to be postponed till midnight."

Here there was a general alarm among the guests, all abjuring any part in the censures of Philipson, and most of them proposing that John Mengs should avenge himself on the actual culprit by turning him instantly out of doors, rather than involve so many innocent and famished persons in the consequences of his guilt. The wine they pronounced excellent; some two or three even drank their glass out to make their words good; and they all offered, if not with lives and fortunes, at least with hands and feet, to support the ban of the house against the contumacious Englishman. While petition and remonstrance were assailing John Mengs on every side, the friar, like a wise counselor and a trusty friend, endeavored to end the feud by advising Philipson to submit to the host's sovereignty.

"Humble thyself, my son," he said; "bend the stubbornness of thy heart before the great lord of the spigot and butt. I speak for the sake of others as well as my own; for Heaven alone knows how much longer they or I can endure this extenuating fast!"

"Worthy guests," said Philipson, "I am grieved to have offended our respected host, and am so far from objecting to the wine, that I will pay for a double flagon of it, to be served all round to this honorable company—so, only, they do not ask me to share of it."

These last words were spoken aside; but the Englishman

could not fail to perceive, from the wry mouths of some of the party who were possessed of a nicer palate, that they were as much afraid as himself of a repetition of the acid potation.

The friar next addressed the company with a proposal that the foreign merchant, instead of being amerced in a measure of the liquor which he had scandalized, should be mulcted in an equal quantity of the more generous wines which were usually produced after the repast had been concluded. In this mine host, as well as the guests, found their advantage; and, as Philipson made no objection, the proposal was unanimously adopted, and John Mengs gave, from his seat of dignity, the signal for supper to be served.

The long-expected meal appeared, and there was twice as much time employed in consuming as there had been in expecting it. The articles of which the supper consisted, as well as the mode of serving them up, were as much calculated to try the patience of the company as the delay which had preceded its appearance. Messes of broth and vegetables followed in succession, with platters of meat sodden and roasted, of which each in its turn took a formal course around the ample table, and was specially subjected to every one in rotation. Black puddings, hung beef, dried fish, also made the circuit, with various condiments, called botargo, caviare, and similar names, composed of the roes of fish mixed with spices, and the like preparations, calculated to awaken thirst and encourage deep drinking. Flagons of wine accompanied these stimulating dainties. The liquor was so superior in flavor and strength to the ordinary wine which had awakened so much controversy, that it might be objected to on the opposite account, being so heady, fiery, and strong that, in spite of the rebuffs which his criticism had already procured, Philipson ventured to ask for some cold water to allay it.

"You are too difficult to please, sir guest," replied the landlord, again bending upon the Englishman a stern and offended brow; "if you find the wine too strong in my house, the secret to allay its strength is to drink the less. It is indifferent to us whether you drink or not, so you pay the reckoning of those good fellows who do." And he laughed a gruff laugh.

Philipson was about to reply, but the friar, retaining his character of mediator, plucked him by the cloak, and entreated him to forbear. "You do not understand the ways of the place," said he: "it is not here as in the hos-

telries of England and France, where each guest calls for what he desires for his own use, and where he pays for what he has required, and for no more. Here we proceed on a broad principle of equality and fraternity. No one asks for anything in particular: but such provisions as the host thinks sufficient are set down before all indiscriminately; and as with the feast, so is it with the reckoning. All pay their proportions alike, without reference to the quantity of wine which one may have swallowed more than another; and thus the sick and infirm, nay, the female and the child, pay the same as the hungry peasant and strolling lanzknecht."

"It seems an unequal custom," said Philipson; "but travelers are not to judge. So that, when a reckoning is called, every one, I am to understand, pays alike?"

"Such is the rule," said the friar—"excepting, perhaps, some poor brother of our own order, whom Our Lady and St. Francis send into such a scene as this that good Christians may bestow their alms upon him, and so make a step on their road to Heaven."

This first words of this speech were spoken in the open and independent tone in which the friar had begun the conversation; the last sentence died away into the professional whine of mendicity proper to the convent, and at once apprised Philipson at what price he was to pay for the friar's counsel and mediation. Having thus explained the custom of the country, good Father Gratian turned to illustrate it by his example, and, having no objection to the new service of wine on account of its strength, he seemed well disposed to signalize himself amongst some stout topers, who, by drinking deeply, appeared determined to have full pennyworths for their share of the reckoning. The good wine gradually did its office, and even the host relaxed his sullen and grim features, and smiled to see the kindling flame of hilarity catch from one to another, and at length embrace almost all the numerous guests at the *table d'hôte*, except a few who were too temperate to partake deeply of the wine, or too fastidious to enter into the discussions to which it gave rise. On these the host cast, from time to time, a sullen and displeased eye.

Philipson, who was reserved and silent, both in consequence of his abstinence from the wine-pot and his unwillingness to mix in conversation with strangers, was looked upon by the landlord as a defaulter in both particulars; and as he aroused his own sluggish nature with the fiery wine Mengs began to throw out obscure hints about kill-joy, mar-com-

pany, spoil-sport, and such-like epithets, which were plainly directed against the Englishman. Philipson replied, with the utmost equanimity, that he was perfectly sensible that his spirits did not at this moment render him an agreeable member of a merry company, and that, with the leave of those present, he would withdraw to his sleeping-apartment, and wish them all a good evening, and continuance to their mirth.

But this very reasonable proposal, as it might have elsewhere seemed, contained in it treason against the laws of German compotation.

"Who are you," said John Mengs, "who presume to leave the table before the reckoning is called and settled? *Sapperment der Teufel!* we are not men upon whom such an offense is to be put with impunity. You may exhibit your polite pranks in Ram's Alley if you will, or in Eastcheap, or in Smithfield; but it shall not be in John Mengs's Golden Fleece, nor will I suffer one guest to go to bed to blink out of the reckoning, and so cheat me and all the rest of my company."

Philipson looked round to gather the sentiments of the company, but saw no encouragement to appeal to their judgment. Indeed, many of them had little judgment left to appeal to, and those who paid any attention to the matter at all were some quiet old soakers, who were already beginning to think of the reckoning, and were disposed to agree with the host in considering the English merchant as a flincher, who was determined to evade payment of what might be drunk after he left the room; so that John Mengs received the applause of the whole company when he concluded his triumphant denunciation against Philipson.

"Yes, sir, you may withdraw if you please; but, *Potz-Element!* it shall not be for this time to seek for another inn, but to the courtyard shall you go, and no further, there to make your bed upon the stable litter; and good enough for the man that will needs be the first to break up good company."

"It is well said, my jovial host," said a rich trader from Ratisbon; "and here are some six of us, more or less, who will stand by you to maintain the good old customs of Germany, and the—umph—laudable and—and praiseworthy rules of the Golden Fleece."

"Nay, be not angry, sir," said Philipson; "yourself and your three companions, whom the good wine has multiplied into six, shall have your own way of ordering the matter;

and since you will not permit me to go to bed, I trust that you will take no offense if I fall asleep in my chair."

"How say you? what think you, mine host?" said the citizen from Ratisbon; "may the gentleman, being drunk, as you see he is, since he cannot tell that three and one make six—I say, may he, being drunk, sleep in the elbow-chair?"

This question introduced a contradiction on the part of the host, who contended that three and one made four, not six; and this again produced a retort from the Ratisbon trader. Other clamors rose at the same time, and were at length with difficulty silenced by the stanzas of a chorus song of mirth and good fellowship, which the friar, now become somewhat oblivious of the rule of St. Francis, thundered forth with better good-will than he ever sung a canticle of King David. Under cover of this tumult, Philipson drew himself a little aside, and though he felt it impossible to sleep, as he had proposed, was yet enabled to escape the reproachful glances with which John Mengs distinguished all those who did not call for wine loudly, and drink it lustily. His thoughts roamed far from the *stube* of the Golden Fleece, and upon matter very different from that which was discussed around him, when his attention was suddenly recalled by a loud and continued knocking on the door of the hostelry.

"What have we here?" said John Mengs, his nose reddening with very indignation—"who the foul fiend presses on the Golden Fleece at such an hour, as if he thundered at the door of a bordel? To the turret window some one—Geoffrey, knave ostler, or thou, old Timothy, tell the rash man there is no admittance into the Golden Fleece save at timeous hours."

The men went as they were directed, and might be heard in the *stube* vying with each other in the positive denial which they gave to the ill-fated guest, who was pressing for admission. They returned, however, to inform their master that they were unable to overcome the obstinacy of the stranger, who refused positively to depart until he had an interview with Mengs himself.

Wroth was the master of the Golden Fleece at this ill-omened pertinacity, and his indignation extended, like a fiery exhalation, from his nose, all over the adjacent regions of his cheeks and brow. He started from his chair, grasped in his hand a stout stick, which seemed his ordinary scepter or leading staff of command, and muttering something con-

cerning cudgels for the shoulders of fools, and pitchers of fair or foul water for the drenching of their ears, he marched off to the window which looked into the court, and left his guests nodding, winking, and whispering to each other, in full expectation of hearing the active demonstrations of his wrath. It happened otherwise, however ; for, after the exchange of a few indistinct words, they were astonished when they heard the noise of the unbolting and unbarring of the gates of the inn and presently after the footsteps of men upon the stairs ; and the landlord entering, with an appearance of clumsy courtesy, prayed those assembled to make room for an honored guest, who came, though late, to add to their numbers. A tall, dark form followed, muffled in a traveling-cloak ; on laying aside which, Philipson at once recognized his late fellow-traveler, the black priest of St. Paul's.

There was in the circumstance itself nothing at all surprising, since it was natural that a landlord, however coarse and insolent to ordinary guests, might yet show deference to an ecclesiastic, whether from his rank in the church or from his reputation for sanctity. But what did appear surprising to Philipson was the effect produced by the entrance of this unexpected guest. He seated himself, without hesitation, at the highest place of the board, from which John Mengs had dethroned the aforesaid trader from Ratisbon, notwithstanding his zeal for ancient German customs, his steady adherence and loyalty to the Golden Fleece, and his propensity to brimming goblets. The priest took instant and unscrupulous possession of his seat of honor, after some negligent reply to the host's unwonted courtesy, when it seemed that the effect of his long black vestments, in place of the slashed and flounced coat of his predecessor, as well as of the cold gray eye with which he slowly reviewed the company, in some degree resembled that of the fabulous Gorgon, and if it did not literally convert those who looked upon it into stone, there was yet something petrifying in the steady, unmoved glance with which he seemed to survey them, looking as if desirous of reading their very inmost souls, and passing from one to another, as if each upon whom he looked in succession was unworthy of longer consideration.

Philipson felt, in his turn, that momentary examination, in which, however, there mingled nothing that seemed to convey recognition. All the courage and composure of the Englishman could not prevent an unpleasant feeling while

under this mysterious man's eye, so that he felt a relief when it passed from him and rested upon another of the company, who seemed in turn to acknowledge the chilling effects of that freezing glance. The noise of intoxicated mirth and drunken disputation, the clamorous argument, and the still more boisterous laugh, which had been suspended on the priest's entering the eating-apartment, now, after one or two vain attempts to resume them, died away, as if the feast had been changed to a funeral, and the jovial guests had been at once converted into the lugubrious mutes who attend on such solemnities. One little rosy-faced man, who afterwards proved to be a tailor from Augsburg, ambitious, perhaps, of showing a degree of courage not usually supposed consistent with his effeminate trade, made a bold effort; and yet it was with a timid and restrained voice that he called on the jovial friar to renew his song. But whether it was that he did not dare to venture on an uncanonical pastime in presence of a brother in orders, or whether he had some other reason for declining the invitation, the merry churchman hung his head, and shook it with such an expressive air of melancholy, that the tailor drew back as if he had been detected in cabbaging from a cardinal's robes, or cribbing the lace of some cope or altar gown. In short, the revel was hushed into deep silence, and so attentive were the company to what should arrive next, that the bells of the village church, striking the first hour after midnight, made the guests start as if they heard them rung backwards to announce an assault or conflagration. The black priest, who had taken some slight and hasty repast, which the host had made no kind of objection to supplying him with, seemed to think the bells, which announced the service of lauds, being the first after midnight, a proper signal for breaking up the party.

"We have eaten," he said, "that we may support life; let us pray, that we may be fit to meet death, which waits upon life as surely as night upon day, or the shadow upon the sunbeam, though we know not when or from whence it is to come upon us."

The company, as if mechanically, bent their uncovered heads, while the priest said, with his deep and solemn voice, a Latin prayer, expressing thanks to God for protection throughout the day, and entreating for its continuance during the witching hours which were to pass ere the day again commenced. The hearers bowed their heads in token of acquiescence in the holy petition; and, when they raised them,

the black priest of St. Paul's had followed the host out of the apartment, probably to that which was destined for his repose. His absence was no sooner perceived than signs and nods, and even whispers, were exchanged between the guests; but no one spoke above his breath, or in such connected manner as that Philipson could understand anything distinctly from them. He himself ventured to ask the friar, who sat near him, observing at the same time the undertone which seemed to be fashionable for the moment, whether the worthy ecclesiastic who had left them was not the priest of St. Paul's, in the frontier town of La Ferette.

"And if you know it is he," said the friar, with a countenance and a tone from which all signs of intoxication were suddenly banished, "why do you ask for me?"

"Because," said the merchant, "I would willingly learn the spell which so suddenly converted so many merry tipplers into men of sober manners, and a jovial company into a convent of Carthusian friars?"

"Friend," said the friar, "thy discourse savoreth mightily of asking after what thou knowest right well. But I am no such silly duck as to be taken by a decoy. If thou knowest the black priest, thou canst not be ignorant of the terrors which attend his presence, and that it were safer to pass a broad jest in the holy house of Loretto than where he shows himself."

So saying, and as if desirous of avoiding further discourse, he withdrew a distance from Philipson.

At the same moment the landlord again appeared, and, with more of the usual manners of a publican than he had hitherto exhibited, commanded his waiter, Geoffrey, to hand round to the company a sleeping-drink, or pillow-cup, of distilled water, mingled with spices, which was indeed as good as Philipson himself had ever tasted. John Mengs, in the meanwhile, with somewhat of more deference, expressed to his guests a hope that his entertainment had given satisfaction; but this was in so careless a manner, and he seemed so conscious of deserving the affirmative which was expressed on all hands, that it became obvious there was very little humility in proposing the question. The old man, Timothy, was in the meantime mustering the guests, and marking with chalk on the bottom of a trencher the reckoning, the particulars of which were indicated by certain conventional hieroglyphics, while he showed on another the division of the sum total among the company, and proceeded to collect an equal share of it from each. When the fatal

trencher, in which each man paid down his money, approached the jolly friar, his countenance seemed to be somewhat changed. He cast a piteous look towards Philipson, as the person from whom he had the most hope of relief; and our merchant, though displeased with the manner in which he had held back from his confidence, yet not willing in a strange country to incur a little expense in the hope of making a useful acquaintance, discharged the mendicant's score as well as his own. The poor friar paid his thanks in many a blessing in good German and bad Latin; but the host cut them short, for, approaching Philipson with a candle in his hand, he offered his own services to show him where he might sleep, and even had the condescension to carry his mail, or portmanteau, with his own landlordly hands.

"You take too much trouble, mine host," said the merchant, somewhat surprised at the change in the manner of John Mengs, who had hitherto contradicted him at every word.

"I cannot take too much pains for a guest," was the reply, "whom my venerable friend the priest of St. Paul's hath especially recommended to my charge."

He then opened the door of a small bedroom, prepared for the occupation of a guest, and said to Philipson--"Here you may rest till to-morrow at what hour you will, and for as many days more as you incline. The key will secure your wares against theft or pillage of any kind. I do not this for every one; for, if my guests were every one to have a bed to himself, the next thing they would demand might be a separate table; and then there would be an end of the good old German customs and we should be as foppish and frivolous as our neighbors."

He placed the portmanteau on the floor, and seemed about to leave the apartment, when, turning about, he began a sort of apology for the rudeness of his former behavior."

"I trust there is no misunderstanding between us, my worthy guest. You might as well expect to see one of our bears come aloft and do tricks like a jackanapes, as one of us stubborn old Germans play the feats of a French or an Italian host. Yet I pray you to note that, if our behavior is rude, our charges are honest, and our articles what they profess to be. We do not expect to make Moselle pass for Rhenish by dint of a bow and a grin, nor will we sauce your mess with poison, like the wily Italian, and call you all the time *Illustrissimo* and *Magnifico.*"

He seemed in these words to have exhausted his rhetoric,

for, when they were spoken, he turned abruptly and left the apartment.

Philipson was thus deprived of another opportunity to inquire who or what this ecclesiastic could be that had exercised such influence on all who approached him. He felt, indeed, no desire to prolong a conference with John Mengs, though he had laid aside in such a considerable degree his rude and repulsive manners; yet he longed to know who this man could be who had power with a word to turn aside the daggers of Alsatian banditti, habituated as they were, like most borderers, to robbery and pillage, and to change into civility the proverbial rudeness of a German innkeeper. Such were the reflections of Philipson, as he doffed his clothes to take his much-needed repose, after a day of fatigue, danger, and difficulty, on the pallet afforded by the hospitality of the Golden Fleece, in the *Rheinthal.*

CHAPTER XX

Macbeth. How now, ye secret, black, and midnight hags!
What is't ye do?
Witches. A deed without a name.

Macbeth.

We have said in the conclusion of the last chapter that, after a day of unwonted fatigue and extraordinary excitation, the merchant Philipson naturally expected to forget so many agitating passages in that deep and profound repose which is at once the consequence and the cure of extreme exhaustion. But he was no sooner laid on his lowly pallet than he felt that the bodily machine, over-labored by so much exercise, was little disposed to the charms of sleep. The mind had been too much excited, the body was far too feverish, to suffer him to partake of needful rest. His anxiety about the safety of his son, his conjectures concerning the issue of his mission to the Duke of Burgundy, and a thousand other thoughts which recalled past events, or speculated on those which were to come, rushed upon his mind like the waves of a perturbed sea, and prevented all tendency to repose. He had been in bed about an hour, and sleep had not yet approached his couch, when he felt that the pallet on which he lay was sinking below him, and that he was in the act of descending along with it he knew not whither. The sound of ropes and pullies was also indistinctly heard, though every caution had been taken to make them run smooth; and the traveler, by feeling around him, became sensible that he and the bed on which he lay had been spread upon a large trap-door, which was capable of being let down into the vaults or apartments beneath.

Philipson felt fear in circumstances so well qualified to produce it; for how could he hope a safe termination to an adventure which had begun so strangely? But his apprehensions were those of a brave, ready-witted man, who, even in the extremity of danger which appeared to surround him, preserved his presence of mind. His descent seemed to be cautiously managed, and he held himself in readiness to start to his feet and defend himself as soon as he should be once more upon firm ground. Although somewhat advanced in

years, he was a man of great personal vigor and activity, and unless taken at advantage, which no doubt was at present much to be apprehended, he was likely to make a formidable defense. His plan of resistance, however, had been anticipated. He no sooner reached the bottom of the vault, down to which he was lowered, than two men, who had been waiting there till the operation was completed, laid hands on him from either side, and, forcibly preventing him from startling up as he intended, cast a rope over his arms, and made him a prisoner as effectually as when he was in the dungeons of La Ferette. He was obliged, therefore, to remain passive and unresisting, and await the termination of this formidable adventure. Secured as he was, he could only turn his head from one side to the other; and it was with joy that he at length saw lights twinkle, but they appeared at a great distance from him.

From the irregular manner in which these scattered lights advanced, sometimes keeping a straight line, sometimes mixing and crossing each other, it might be inferred that the subterranean vault in which they appeared was of very considerable extent. Their number also increased; and as they collected more together, Philipson could perceive that the lights proceeded from many torches, borne by men muffled in black cloaks, like mourners at a funeral, or the black friars of St. Francis's [Dominic's] order, wearing their cowls drawn over their heads, so as to conceal their features. They appeared anxiously engaged in measuring off a portion of the apartment; and, while occupied in that employment, they sung, in the ancient German language, rhymes more rude than Philipson could well understand, but which may be imitated thus:—

> Measures of good and evil,
> Bring the square, the line, the level.
> Rear the altar, dig the trench;
> Blood both stone and ditch shall drench.
> Cubits six, from end to end,
> Must the fatal bench extend;
> Cubits six, from side to side,
> Judge and culprit must divide.
> On the east the court assembles,
> On the west the accused trembles;
> Answer, brethren, all and one,
> Is the ritual rightly done?

A deep chorus seemed to reply to the question. Many voices joined in it, as well of persons already in the subterranean vault as of others who as yet remained without in

various galleries and passages which communicated with it, and whom Philipson now presumed to be very numerous. The answer chanted run as follows :—

On life and soul, on blood and bone,
One for all, and all for one,
We warrant this is rightly done.

The original strain was then renewed in the same manner as before—

How wears the night? Doth morning shine
In early radiance on the Rhine?
What music floats upon his tide?
Do birds the tardy morning chide?
Brethren, look out from hill and height,
And answer true, how wears the night?

The answer was returned, though less loud than at first, and it seemed that those by whom the reply was given were at a much greater distance than before ; yet the words were distinctly heard.

The night is old; on Rhine's broad breast
Glance drowsy stars which long to rest.
No beams are twinkling in the east.
There is a voice upon the flood,
The stern still call of blood for blood;
'Tis time we listen the behest.

The chorus replied, with many additional voices—

Up, then, up! When day's at rest,
'Tis time that such as we are watchers;
Rise to judgment, brethren, rise!
Vengeance knows not sleepy eyes,
He and night are matchers.

The nature of the verses soon led Philipson to comprehend that he was in presence of the Initiated, or the Wise Men—names which were applied to the celebrated judges of the Secret Tribunal, which continued at that period to subsist in Swabia, Franconia, and other districts of the east [west] of Germany, which was called, perhaps from the frightful and frequent occurrence of executions by command of those invisible judges, the Red Land. Philipson had often heard that the seat of a free count, or chief of the Secret Tribunal, was secretly instituted even on the left bank of the Rhine, and that it maintained itself in Alsace, with the

usual tenacity of those secret societies, though Duke Charles of Burgundy had expressed a desire to discover and discourage its influence so far as was possible, without exposing himself to danger from the thousands of poniards which that mysterious tribunal could put in activity against his own life —an awful means of defense, which for a long time rendered it extremely hazardous for the sovereigns of Germany, and even the emperors themselves, to put down by authority those singular associations.

So soon as this explanation flashed on the mind of Philipson, it gave some clue to the character and condition of the black priest of St. Paul's. Supposing him to be a president, or chief official, of the secret association, there was little wonder that he should confide so much in the inviolability of his terrible office as to propose vindicating the execution of De Hagenbach ; that his presence should surprise Bartholomew, whom he had power to have judged and executed upon the spot ; and that his mere appearance at supper on the preceding evening should have appalled the guests ; for though everything about the institution, its proceedings and its officers, was preserved in as much obscurity as is now practised in freemasonry, yet the secret was not so absolutely well kept as to prevent certain individuals from being guessed or hinted at as men initiated and intrusted with high authority by the *Vehmegericht,* or tribunal of the bounds. When such suspicion attached to an individual, his secret power, and supposed acquaintance with all guilt, however secret, which was committed within the society in which he was conversant, made him at once the dread and hatred of every one who looked on him ; and he enjoyed a high degree of personal respect, on the same terms on which it would have been yielded to a powerful enchanter or a dreaded genie. In conversing with such a person, it was especially necessary to abstain from all questions alluding, however remotely, to the office which he bore in the secret Tribunal ; and, indeed, to testify the least curiosity upon a subject so solemn and mysterious was sure to occasion some misfortune to the inquisitive person.

All these things rushed at once upon the mind of the Englishman, who felt that he had fallen into the hands of an unsparing tribunal, whose proceedings were so much dreaded by those who resided within the circle of their power that the friendless stranger must stand a poor chance of receiving justice at their hands, whatever might be his consciousness of innocence. While Philipson made this melancholy

reflection, he resolved, at the same time, not to forsake his own cause, but defend himself as he best might; conscious as he was that these terrible and irresponsible judges were nevertheless governed by certain rules of right and wrong; which formed a check on the rigors of their extraordinary code.

He lay, therefore, divising the best means of obviating the present danger, while the persons whom he beheld glimmered before him, less like distinct and individual forms than like the phantoms of a fever, or the phantasmagoria with which a disease of the optic nerves has been known to people a sick man's chamber. At length they assembled in the center of the apartment where they had first appeared, and seemed to arrange themselves into form and order. A great number of black torches were successively lighted, and the scene became distinctly visible. In the center of the hall, Philipson could now perceive one of the altars which are sometimes to be found in ancient subterranean chapels. But we must pause, in order briefly to describe, not the appearance only, but the nature and constitution, of this terrible court.

Behind the altar, which seemed to be the central point, on which all eyes were bent, there were placed in parallel lines two benches covered with black cloth. Each was occupied by a number of persons, who seemed assembled as judges; but those who held the foremost bench were fewer, and appeared of a rank superior to those who crowded the seat most remote from the altar. The first seemed to be all men of some consequence—priests high in their order, knights, or noblemen; and, notwithstanding an appearance of equality which seemed to pervade this singular institution, much more weight was laid upon their opinion, or testimonies. They were called free knights, counts, or whatever title they might bear, while the inferior class of the judges were only termed free and worthy burghers. For it must be observed that the Vehmique Institution,* which was the name that it commonly bore, although its power consisted in a wide system of espionage, and tyrannical application of force which acted upon it, was yet (so rude were the ideas of enforcing public law) accounted to confer a privilege on the country in which it was received, and only freemen were allowed to experience its influence. Serfs and peasants could neither have a place among the free judges, their assessors, or assist-

* See Vehme. Note 6.

ants ; for there was in this assembly even some idea of trying the culprit by his peers.

Besides the dignitaries who occupied the benches, there were others who stood around, and seemed to guard the various entrances to the hall of judgment, or, standing behind the seats on which their superiors were ranged, looked prepared to execute their commands. These were members of the order, though not of the highest ranks. *Schoppen* [*schoffen*] is the name generally assigned to them, signifying officials, or sergeants, of the Vehmique Court, whose doom they stood sworn to enforce, through good report and bad report, against their own nearest and most beloved, as well as in cases of ordinary malefactors.

The *schoppen*, or *scabini*, as they were termed in Latin, had another horrible duty to perform, that, namely, of denouncing to the tribunal whatever came under their observation that might be construed as an offense falling under its cognizance, or, in their language, a crime against the Vehme. This duty extended to the judges as well as the assistants, and was to be discharged without respect of persons ; so that to know, and wilfully conceal, the guilt of a mother or brother inferred, on the part of the unfaithful official, the same penalty as if he himself had committed the crime which his silence screened from punishment. Such an institution could only prevail at a time when ordinary means of justice were excluded by the hand of power, and when, in order to bring the guilty to punishment, it required all the influence and authority of such a confederacy. In no other country than one exposed to every species of feudal tyranny, and deprived of every ordinary mode of obtaining justice or redress, could such a system have taken root and flourished.

We must now return to the brave Englishman, who, though feeling all the danger he encountered from so tremendous a tribunal, maintained nevertheless a dignified and unaltered composure.

The meeting being assembled, a coil of ropes and a naked sword, the well-known signals and emblems of Vehmique authority, were deposited on the altar ; where the sword, from its being usually straight, with a cross handle, was considered as representing the blessed emblem of Christian redemption, and the cord as indicating the right of criminal jurisdiction and capital punishment. Then the president of the meeting, who occupied the center seat on the foremost bench, arose, and, laying his hand on the symbols, pronounced aloud the formula expressive of the duty of the

tribunal, which all the inferior judges and assistants repeated after him, in deep and hollow murmurs.

"I swear, by the Holy Trinity, to aid and co-operate without relaxation in the things belonging to the Holy Vehme, to defend its doctrines and institutions against father and mother, brother and sister, wife and children; against fire, water, earth, and air; against all that the sun enlightens; against all that the dew moistens; against all created things of heaven and earth, or the waters under the earth; and I swear to give information to this holy judicature of all that I know to be true, or hear repeated by credible testimony, which, by the rules of the Holy Vehme, is deserving of animadversion or punishment; and that I will not cloak, cover, or conceal such my knowledge, neither for love, friendship, or family affection, nor for gold, silver, or precious stones; neither will I associate with such as are under the sentence of this Sacred Tribunal, by hinting to a culprit his danger, or advising him to escape, or aiding and supplying him with counsel, or means to that effect; neither will I relieve such culprit with fire, clothes, food, or shelter, though my father should require from me a cup of water in the heat of summer noon, or my brother should request to sit by my fire in the bitterest cold night of winter: And further, I vow and promise to honor this holy association, and to do its behests speedily, faithfully, and firmly, in preference to those of any other tribunal whatsoever—so help me God and His holy Evangelists."

When this oath of office had been taken, the president addressing the assembly, as men who judge in secret and punish in secret, like the Deity, desired them to say why this "child of the cord"* lay before them, bound and helpless. An individual rose from the more remote bench, and in a voice which, though altered and agitated, Philipson conceived that he recognized, declared himself the accuser as bound by his oath, of the child of the cord, or prisoner, who lay before them.

"Bring forward the prisoner," said the president, "duly secured, as is the order of our secret law; but not with such severity as may interrupt his attention to the proceedings of the tribunal, or limit his power of hearing and replying."

Six of the assistants immediately dragged forward the pallet and platform of boards on which Philipson lay, and advanced

* The term *Strickkind*, or child of the cord, was applied to the person accused before these awful assemblies.

it towards the foot of the altar. This done, each unsheathed his dagger, while two of them unloosed the cords by which the merchant's hands were secured, and admonished him in a whisper that the slightest attempt to resist or escape would be the signal to stab him dead.

"Arise!" said the president; "listen to the charge to be preferred against you, and believe you shall in us find judges equally just and inflexible."

Philipson, carefully avoiding any gesture which might indicate a desire to escape, raised his body on the lower part of the couch, and remained seated, clothed as he was in his undervest and *caleçons*, or drawers, so as exactly to face the muffled president of the terrible court. Even in these agitating circumstances, the mind of the undaunted Englishman remained unshaken, and his eyelid did not quiver, nor his heart beat quicker, though he seemed, according to the expression of Scripture, to be a pilgrim in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, beset by numerous snares, and encompassed by total darkness, where light was most necessary for safety.

The president demanded his name, country, and occupation.

"John Philipson," was the reply; "by birth an Englishman, by profession a merchant."

"Have you ever borne any other name and profession?" demanded the judge.

"I have been a soldier, and, like most others, had then a name by which I was known in war."

"What was that name?"

"I laid it aside when I resigned my sword, and I do not desire again to be known by it. Moreover, I never bore it where your institutions have weight and authority," answered the Englishman.

"Know you before whom you stand?" continued the judge.

"I may at least guess," replied the merchant.

"Tell your guess, then," continued the interrogator. "Say who we are, and wherefore are you before us?"

"I believe that I am before the Unknown, or Secret Tribunal, which is called Vehmegericht."

"Then are you aware," answered the judge, "that you would be safer if you were suspended by the hair over the abyss of Schaffhausen, or if you lay below an ax, which a thread of silk alone kept back from the fall. What have you done to deserve such a fate?"

"Let those reply by whom I am subjected to it," answered Philipson, with the same composure as before.

"Speak, accuser!" said the president, "to the four quarters of Heaven, to the ears of the free judges of this tribunal, and the faithful executors of their doom; and to the face of the child of the cord, who denies or conceals his guilt, make good the substance of thine accusation."

"Most dreaded," answered the accuser, addressing the president, "this man hath entered the Sacred Territory which is called this Red Land, a stranger under a disguised name and profession. When he was yet on the eastern side of the Alps, at Turin, in Lombardy, and elsewhere, he at various times spoke of the Holy Tribunal in terms of hatred and contempt, and declared that, were he Duke of Burgundy, he would not permit it to extend itself from Westphalia, or Swabia, into his dominions. Also I charge him that, nourishing this malevolent intention against the Holy Tribunal, he who now appears before the bench as child of the cord has intimated his intention to wait upon the court of the Duke of Burgundy, and use his influence with him, which he boasts will prove effectual to stir him up to prohibit the meetings of the Holy Vehme in his dominions, and to inflict on their officers and the executors of their mandates the punishment due to robbers and assassins."

"This is a heavy charge, brother," said the president of the assembly, when the accuser ceased speaking. "How do you purpose to make it good?"

"According to the tenor of those secret statutes the perusal of which is prohibited to all but the initiated," answered the accuser.

"It is well," said the president; "but I ask thee once more, what are those means of proof? You speak to holy and to initiated ears."

"I will prove my charge," said the accuser, "by the confession of the party himself, and by my own oath upon the holy emblems of the Secret Judgment—that is, the steel and the cord."

"It is a legitimate offer of proof," said a member of the aristocratic bench of the assembly; "and it much concerns the safety of the system to which we are bound by such deep oaths, a system handed down to us from the most Christian and Holy Roman Emperor, Charlemagne, for the conversion of the heathen Saracens, and punishing such of them as revolted again to their pagan practises, that such criminals should be looked to. This Duke Charles of Burgundy hath

already crowded his army with foreigners, whom he can easily employ against the Secret Court, more especially with English, a fierce, insular people, wedded to their own usages, and hating those of every other nation. It is not unknown to us, that the Duke hath already encouraged opposition to the officials of the Tribunal in more than one part of his German dominions; and that in consequence, instead of submitting to their doom with reverent resignation, children of the cord have been found bold enough to resist the executioners of the Vehme, striking, wounding, and even slaying those who have received commission to put them to death. This contumacy must be put an end to; and if the accused shall be proved to be one of those by whom such doctrines are harbored and inculcated, I say, let the steel and cord do their work on him."

A general murmur seemed to approve what the speaker had said; for all were conscious that the power of the Tribunal depended much more on the opinion of its being deeply and firmly rooted in the general system than upon any regard or esteem for an institution of which all felt the severity. It followed, that those of the members who enjoyed consequence by means of their station in the ranks of the Vehme saw the necessity of supporting its terrors by occasional examples of severe punishment; and none could be more readily sacrificed than an unknown and wandering foreigner. All this rushed upon Philipson's mind, but did not prevent his making a steady reply to the accusation.

"Gentlemen," he said, "good citizens, burgesses, or by whatever other name you please to be addressed, know, that in my former days I have stood in as great peril as now, and have never turned my heel to save my life. Cords and daggers are not calculated to strike terror into those who have seen swords and lances. My answer to the accusation is, that I am an Englishman, one of a nation accustomed to yield and to receive open-handed and equal justice dealt forth in the broad light of day. I am, however, a traveler, who knows that he has no right to oppose the rules and laws of other nations because they do not resemble those of his own. But this caution can only be called for in lands where the system about which we converse is in full force and operation. If we speak of the institutions of Germany, being at the time in France or Spain, we may, without offense to the country in which they are current, dispute concerning them as students debate upon a logical thesis in a university. The accuser objects to me, that at Turin, or elsewhere in the

north of Italy, I spoke with censure of the institution under which I am now judged. I will not deny that I remember something of the kind; but it was in consequence of the question being in a manner forced upon me by two guests with whom I chanced to find myself at table. I was much and earnestly solicited for an opinion ere I gave one."

"And was that opinion," said the presiding judge, "favorable or otherwise to the Holy and secret Vehmegericht? Let the truth rule your tongue; remember, life is short, judgment is eternal."

"I would not save my life at the expense of a falsehood. My opinion was unfavorable, and I expressed myself thus: No law or judicial proceedings can be just or commendable which exist and operate by means of a secret combination. I said, that justice could only live and exist in the open air, and that, when she ceased to be public, she degenerated into revenge and hatred. I said, that a system, of which your own jurists have said, *non frater a frater, non hospes a hospite, tutus* was too much adverse to the laws of nature to be connected with or regulated by those of religion."

These words were scarcely uttered, when there burst a murmur from the judges highly unfavorable to the prisoner. "He blasphemes the Holy Vehme. Let his mouth be closed forever!"

"Hear me," said the Englishman, "as you will one day wish to be yourselves heard! I say, such were my sentiments, and so I expressed them. I say also, I had a right to express these opinions, whether sound or erroneous, in a neutral country, where this tribunal neither did nor could claim any jurisdiction. My sentiments are still the same. I would avow them if that sword were at my bosom, or that cord around my throat. But I deny that I have ever spoken against the institutions of your Vehme in a country where it had its course as a national mode of justice. Far more strongly, if possible, do I denounce the absurdity of the falsehood, which represents me, a wandering foreigner, as commissioned to traffic with the Duke of Burgundy about such high matters, or to form a conspiracy for the destruction of a system to which so many seem warmly attached. I never said such a thing, and I never thought it."

"Accuser," said the presiding judge, "thou hast heard the accused. What is thy reply?"

"The first part of the charge," said the accuser, "he hath confessed in this high presence, namely, that his foul tongue hath basely slandered our holy mysteries; for which he de-

serves that it should be torn out of his throat. I myself, on my oath of office, will aver, as use and law is, that the rest of the accusation, namely, that which taxes him as having entered into machinations for the destruction of the Vehmique institutions, is as true as that which he has found himself unable to deny."

"In justice," said the Englishman, "the accusation, if not made good by satisfactory proof, ought to be left to the oath of the party accused, instead of permitting the accuser to establish by his own deposition the defects in his own charge."

"Stranger," replied the presiding judge, "we permit to thy ignorance a longer and more full defense than consists with our usual forms. Know, that the right of sitting among these venerable judges confers on the person of him who enjoys it a sacredness of character which ordinary men cannot attain to. The oath of one of the initiated must counterbalance the most solemn asseveration of every one that is not acquainted with our holy secrets. In the Vehmique Court all must be Vehmique. The averment of the Emperor, he being uninitiated, would not have so much weight in our counsels as that of one of the meanest of these officials. The affirmation of the accuser can only be rebutted by the oath of a member of the same tribunal, being of superior rank."

"Then God be gracious to me, for I have no trust save in Heaven!" said the Englishman, in solemn accents. "Yet I will not fall without an effort. I call upon thee thyself, dark spirit, who presidest in this most deadly assembly—I call upon thyself, to declare on thy faith and honor whether thou holdest me guilty of what is thus boldly averred by this false calumniator—I call upon thee by thy sacred character—by the name of——"

"Hold!" replied the presiding judge. "The name by which we are known in open air must not be pronounced in this subterranean judgment-seat."

He then proceeded to address the prisoner and the assembly. "I, being called on in evidence, declare that the charge against thee is so far true as it is acknowledged by thyself, namely, that thou hast in other lands than the Red Soil* spoken lightly of this holy institution of justice. But I believe in my soul, and will bear witness on my honor, that the rest of the accusation is incredible and false. And this I swear, holding my hand on the dagger and the cord. What

* See Note 7.

is your judgment, my brethren, upon the case which you have investigated ?"

A member of the first-seated and highest class among the judges, muffled like the rest, but the tone of whose voice and the stoop of whose person announced him to be more advanced in years than the other two who had before spoken, arose with difficulty, and said with a trembling voice—

"The child of the cord who is before us has been convicted of folly and rashness in slandering our holy institution. But he spoke his folly to ears which had never heard our sacred laws. He has, therefore, been acquitted by irrefragable testimony of combining for the impotent purpose of undermining our power, or stirring up princes against our holy association, for which death were too light a punishment. He hath been foolish, then, but not criminal ; and as the holy laws of the Vehme bear no penalty save that of death, I propose for judgment that the child of the cord be restored without injury to society, and to the upper world, having been first duly admonished of his errors."

"Child of the cord," said the presiding judge, "thou hast heard thy sentence of acquittal. But, as thou desirest to sleep in an unbloody grave, let me warn thee that the secrets of this night shall remain with thee, as a secret not to be communicated to father nor mother, to spouse, son, or daughter, neither to be spoken aloud nor whispered, to be told in words or written in characters, to be carved or to be painted, or to be otherwise communicated, either directly or by parable and emblem. Obey this behest and thy life is in surety. Let thy heart then rejoice within thee, but let it rejoice with trembling. Nevermore let thy vanity persuade thee that thou art secure from the servants and judges of the Holy Vehme. Though a thousand leagues lie between thee and the Red Land, and thou speakest in that where our power is not known ; though thou shouldst be sheltered by thy native island, and defended by thy kindred ocean, yet, even there, I warn thee to cross thyself when thou dost so much as think of the Holy and Invisible Tribunal, and to retain thy thoughts within thine own bosom ; for the avenger may be beside thee, and thou mayst die in thy folly. Go hence, be wise, and let the fear of the Holy Vehme never pass from before thine eyes."

At the concluding words, all the lights were at once extinguished with a hissing noise. Philipson felt once more the grasp of the hands of the officials, to which he resigned himself as the safest course. He was gently prostrated on

his pallet-bed, and transported back to the place from which he had been advanced to the foot of the altar. The cordage was again applied to the platform, and Philipson was sensible that his couch rose with him for a few moments, until a slight shock apprised him that he was again brought to a level with the floor of the chamber in which he had been lodged on the preceding night, or rather morning. He pondered over the events that had passed, in which he was sensible that he owed Heaven thanks for a great deliverance. Fatigue at length prevailed over anxiety, and he fell into a deep and profound sleep, from which he was only awakened by returning light. He resolved on an instant departure from so dangerous a spot, and, without seeing any one of the household but the old ostler, pursued his journey to Strasburg, and reached that city without farther accident.

CHAPTER XXI

Away with these! True wisdom's world will be
Within its own creation, or in thine,
Maternal Nature, for who teems like thee
Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine?
There Harold gazes on a work divine,
A blending of all beauties, streams, and dells—
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield, mountain, vine,
And chiefless castles breathing stern farewells,
From gray but leafy walls, where ruin greenly dwells.
Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Canto III.

When Arthur Philipson left his father, to go on board the bark which was to waft him across the Rhine, he took but few precautions for his own subsistence during a separation of which he calculated the duration to be very brief. Some necessary change of raiment and a very few pieces of gold were all which he thought it needful to withdraw from the general stock; the rest of the baggage and money he left with the sumpter-horse, which he concluded his father might need, in order to sustain his character as an English trader. Having embarked with his horse and his slender appointments on board a fishing-skiff, she instantly raised her temporary mast, spread a sail across the yard, and, supported by the force of the wind against the downward power of the current, moved across the river obliquely in the direction of Kirchoff, which, as we have said, lies somewhat lower on the river than Hans Chapelle. Their passage was so favorable, that they reached the opposite side in a few minutes, but not until Arthur, whose eye and thoughts were on the left bank, had seen his father depart from the Chapel of the Ferry, accompanied by two horsemen, whom he readily concluded to be the guide Bartholomew and some chance traveler who had joined him; but the second of whom was in truth the black priest of St. Paul's, as has been already mentioned.

This augmentation of his father's company was, he could not but think, likely to be attended with an increase of his safety, since it was not probable he would suffer a companion to be forced upon him, and one of his own choosing might be a protection, in case his guide should prove treach-

erous. At any rate, he had to rejoice that he had seen his father depart in safety from the spot where they had reason to apprehend some danger awaited him. He resolved, therefore, to make no stay at Kirchoff, but to pursue his way as fast as possible towards Strasburg, and rest, when darkness compelled him to stop, in one of the dorffs, or villages, which were situated on the German side of the Rhine. At Strasburg, he trusted, with the sanguine spirit of youth, he might again be able to rejoin his father ; and if he could not altogether subdue his anxiety on their separation, he fondly nourished the hope that he might meet him in safety. After some short refreshment and repose afforded to his horse, he lost no time in proceeding on his journey down the eastern bank of the broad river.

He was now upon the most interesting side of the Rhine, walled in and repelled as the river is on that shore by the most romantic cliffs, now mantled with vegetation of the richest hue, tinged with all the variegated colors of autumn ; now surmounted by fortresses, over whose gates were displayed the pennons of their proud owners ; or studded with hamlets, where the richness of the soil supplied to the poor laborer the food of which the oppressive hand of his superior threatened altogether to deprive him. Every stream which here contributes its waters to the Rhine winds through its own tributary dell, and each valley possesses a varying and separate character—some rich with pastures, cornfields, and vineyards, some frowning with crags and precipices and other romantic beauties.

The principles of taste were not then explained or analyzed as they have been since, in countries where leisure has been found for this investigation. But the feelings arising from so rich a landscape as is displayed by the valley of the Rhine must have been the same in every bosom, from the period when our Englishman took his solitary journey through it, in doubt and danger, till that in which it heard the indignant Childe Harold bid a proud farewell to his native country, in the vain search of a land in which his heart might throb less fiercely.

Arthur enjoyed this scene, although the fading daylight began to remind him that, alone as he was, and traveling with a very valuable charge, it would be matter of prudence to look out for some place of rest during the night. Just as he had formed the resolution of inquiring at the next habitation he should pass which way he should follow for this purpose, the road he pursued descended into a beauti-

ful amphitheater filled with large trees, which protected from the heats of summer the delicate and tender herbage of the pasture. A large brook flowed through it and joined the Rhine. At a short mile up the brook, its waters made a crescent round a steep, craggy eminence, crowned with flanking walls, and Gothic towers and turrets, inclosing a feudal castle of the first order. A part of the savannah that has been mentioned had been irregularly cultivated for wheat, which had grown a plentiful crop. It was gathered in, but the patches of deep yellow stubble contrasted with the green of the undisturbed pasture-land, and with the seared and dark-red foliage of the broad oaks which stretched their arms athwart the level space. There a lad in a rustic dress was employed in the task of netting a brood of partridges, with the assistance of a trained spaniel; while a young woman, who had the air rather of a domestic in some family of rank than that of an ordinary villager, sat on the stump of a decayed tree, to watch the progress of the amusement. The spaniel, whose duty it was to drive the partridges under the net, was perceptibly disturbed at the approach of the traveler; his attention was divided, and he was obviously in danger of marring the spot, by barking and putting up the covey, when the maiden quitted her seat, and, advancing towards Philipson, requested him, for courtesy, to pass at a greater distance, and not interfere with their amusement.

The traveler willingly complied with her request.

"I will ride, fair damsel," he said, "at whatever distance you please. And allow me, in guerdon, to ask whether there is convent, castle, or good man's house where a stranger, who is belated and weary, might receive a night's hospitality?"

The girl, whose face he had not yet distinctly seen, seemed to suppress some desire to laugh, as she replied, "Hath not yon castle, think you," pointing to the distant towers, "some corner which might accommodate a stranger in such extremity?"

"Space enough, certainly," said Arthur; "but perhaps little inclination to grant it."

"I myself," said the girl, "being one, and a formidable part, of the garrison, will be answerable for your reception. But as you parley with me in such hostile fashion, it is according to martial order that I should put down my visor."

So saying, she concealed her face under one of those riding-masks which at that period women often wore when

they went abroad, whether for protecting their complexion or screening themselves from intrusive observation. But, ere she could accomplish this operation, Arthur had detected the merry countenance of Annette Veilchen, a girl who, though her attendance of Anne of Geierstein was in a menial capacity, was held in high estimation at Geierstein. She was a bold wench, unaccustomed to the distinctions of rank, which were little regarded in the simplicity of the Helvetian hills, and she was ready to laugh, jest, and flirt with the young men of the Landamman's family. This attracted no attention, the mountain manners making little distinction between the degrees of attendant and mistress, further than that the mistress was a young woman who required help and the maiden one who was in a situation to offer and afford it. This kind of familiarity would perhaps have been dangerous in other lands, but the simplicity of Swiss manners, and the turn of Annette's disposition, which was resolute and sensible, though rather bold and free, when compared to the manners of more civilized countries, kept all intercourse betwixt her and the young men of the family in the strict path of honor and innocence.

Arthur himself had paid considerable attention to Annette, being naturally, from his feelings towards Anne of Geierstein, heartily desirous to possess the good graces of her attendant—a point which was easily gained by the attentions of a handsome young man, and the generosity with which he heaped upon her small presents of articles of dress or ornament, which the damsel, however faithful, could find no heart to refuse.

The assurance that he was in Anne's neighborhood, and that he was likely to pass the night under the same roof, both of which circumstances were intimated by the girl's presence and language, sent the blood in a hastier current through Arthur's veins; for though, since he had crossed the river, he had sometimes nourished hopes of again seeing her who had made so strong an impression on his imagination, yet his understanding had as often told him how slight was the chance of their meeting, and it was even now chilled by the reflection that it could be followed only by the pain of a sudden and final separation. He yielded himself, however, to the prospect of promised pleasure without attempting to ascertain what was to be its duration or its consequence. Desirous, in the meantime, to hear as much of Anne's circumstances as Annette chose to tell, he resolved not to let that merry maiden perceive that she was known

by him, until she chose of her own accord to lay aside her mystery.

While these thoughts passed rapidly through his imagination, Annette bade the lad drop his nets, and directed him that, having taken two of the best-fed partridges from the covey and carried them into the kitchen, he was to set the rest at liberty.

"I must provide supper," said she to the traveler, "since I am bringing home unexpected company."

Arthur earnestly expressed his hope that his experiencing the hospitality of the castle would occasion no trouble to the inmates, and received satisfactory assurances upon the subject of his scruples.

"I would not willingly be the cause of inconvenience to your mistress," pursued the traveler.

"Look you there," said Annette Veilchen, "I have said nothing of master or mistress, and this poor forlorn traveler has already concluded in his own mind that he is to be harbored in a lady's bower!"

"Why, did you not tell me," said Arthur, somewhat confused at his blunder, "that you were the person of second importance in the place? A damsel, I judged, could only be an officer under a female governor."

"I do not see the justice of the conclusion," replied the maiden. "I have known ladies bear offices of trust in lords' families—nay, and over the lords themselves."

"Am I to understand, fair damsel, that you hold so predominant a situation in the castle which we are now approaching, and of which I pray you to tell me the name?"

"The name of the castle is Arnheim," said Annette.

"Your garrison must be a large one," said Arthur, looking at the extensive building, "if you are able to man such a labyrinth of walls and towers."

"In that point," said Annette, "I must needs own we are very deficient. At present, we rather hide in the castle than inhabit it; and yet it is well enough defended by the reports which frighten every other person who might disturb its seclusion."

"And yet you yourselves dare to reside in it?" said the Englishman, recollecting the tale which had been told by Rudolph Donnerhugel concerning the character of the Barons of Arnheim, and the final catastrophe of the family.

"Perhaps," replied his guide, "we are too intimate with the cause of such fears to feel ourselves strongly oppressed with them; perhaps we have means of encountering the sup-

posed terrors proper to ourselves ; perhaps, and it is not the least likely conjecture, we have no choice of a better place of refuge. Such seems to be your own fate at present, sir, for the tops of the distant hills are gradually losing the lights of the evening, and if you rest not in Arnheim, well contented or not, you are likely to find no safe lodging for many a mile."

As she thus spoke, she separated from Arthur, taking, with the fowler who attended her, a very steep but short footpath, which ascended straight up to the site of the castle ; at the same time motioning the young Englishman to follow a horse-track, which, more circuitous, led to the same point, and, though less direct, was considerably more easy.

He soon stood before the south front of Arnheim Castle, which was a much larger building than he had conceived, either from Rudolph's description or from the distant view. It had been erected at many different periods, and a considerable part of the edifice was less in the strict Gothic than in what has been termed the Saracenic style, in which the imagination of the architect is more florid than that which is usually indulged in the North—rich in minarets, cupolas, and similar approximations to Oriental structures. This singular building bore a general appearance of desolation and desertion, but Rudolph had been misinformed when he declared that it had become ruinous. On the contrary, it had been maintained with considerable care ; and when it fell into the hands of the Emperor, although no garrison was maintained within its precincts, care was taken to keep the building in repair ; and although the prejudices of the country people prevented any one from passing the night within the fearful walls, yet it was regularly visited from time to time by a person having commission from the Imperial Chancery to that effect. The occupation of the domain around the castle was a valuable compensation for this official person's labor, and he took care not to endanger the loss of it by neglecting his duty. Of late this officer had been withdrawn, and now it appeared that the young baroness of Arnheim had found refuge in the deserted towers of her ancestors.

The Swiss damsel did not leave the youthful traveler time to study particularly the exterior of the castle, or to construe the meaning of emblems and mottoes, seemingly of an Oriental character, with which the outside was inscribed, and which expressed in various modes, more or less directly, the attachment of the builders of this extensive pile to the learning of the Eastern sages. Ere he had time to take more than a

general survey of the place, the voice of the Swiss maiden called him to an angle of the wall in which there was a projection, from whence a long plank extended over a dry moat, and was connected with a window in which Annette was standing.

"You have forgotten your Swiss lessons already," said she, observing that Arthur went rather timidly about crossing the temporary and precarious drawbridge.

The reflection that Anne, her mistress, might make the same observation recalled the young traveler to the necessary degree of composure. He passed over the plank with the same *sang froid* with which he had learned to brave the far more terrific bridge beneath the ruinous Castle of Geierstein. He had no sooner entered the window than Annette, taking off her mask, bade him welcome to Germany, and to old friends with new names.

"Anne of Geierstein," she said, "is no more; but you will presently see the Lady Baroness of Arnheim, who is extremely like her; and I, who was Annette Veilchen in Switzerland, the servant to a damsel who was not esteemed much greater than myself, am now the young baroness's waiting-woman, and make everybody of less quality stand back."

"If, in such circumstances," said young Philipson, "you have the influence due to your consequence, let me beseech of you to tell the baroness, since we must now call her so, that my present intrusion on her is occasioned by my ignorance."

"Away—away," said the girl, laughing, "I know better what to say in your behalf. You are not the first poor man and peddler that has got the graces of a great lady; but I warrant you it was not by making humble apologies, and talking of unintentional intrusion. I will tell her of love, which all the Rhine cannot quench, and which has driven you hither, leaving you no other choice than to come or to perish!"

"Nay, but, Annette—Annette——"

"Fie on you for a fool—make a shorter name of it: cry "Anne—Anne!" and there will be more prospect of your being answered."

So saying, the wild girl ran out of the room, delighted, as a mountaineer of her description was likely to be, with the thought of having done as she would desire to be done by, in her benevolent exertions to bring two lovers together, when on the eve of inevitable separation.

In this self-approving disposition, Annette sped up a

narrow turnpike-stair to a closet, or dressing-room, where her young mistress was seated, and exclaimed, with open mouth—"Anne of Gei——I mean, my lady baroness, they are come—they are come!"

"The Philipsons?" said Anne, almost breathless as she asked the question.

"Yes—no," answered the girl; "that is, yes, for the best of them is come, and that is Arthur."

"What meanest thou, girl? Is not Signior Philipson, the father, along with his son?"

"Not he, indeed," answered Veilchen, "nor did I ever think of asking about him. He was no friend of mine, nor of any one else, save the old Landamman; and well met they were for a couple of wiseacres, with eternal proverbs in their mouths and care upon their brows."

"Unkind, inconsiderate girl, what hast thou done?" said Anne of Geierstein. "Did I not warn and charge thee to bring them both hither, and you have brought the young man alone to a place where we are nearly in solitude? What will he—what can he think of me?"

"Why, what should I have done?" said Annette, remaining firm in her argument. "He was alone, and should I have sent him down to the *dorff* to be murdered by the Rhinegrave's lanzknechts? All is fish, I trow, that comes to their net; and how is he to get through this country, so beset with wandering soldiers, robber barons—I beg your ladyship's pardon—and roguish Italians, flocking to the Duke of Burgundy's standard—not to mention the greatest terror of all, that is never in one shape or other absent from one's eye or thought?"

"Hush—hush, girl! add not utter madness to the excess of folly; but let us think what is to be done. For our sake, for his own, this unfortunate young man must leave this castle instantly."

"You must take the message yourself then, Anne—I beg pardon, most noble baroness; it may be very fit for a lady of high birth to send such a message, which, indeed, I have heard the minnesingers tell in their romances; but I am sure it is not a meet one for me, or any frank-hearted Swiss girl, to carry. No more foolery; but remember, if you were born Baroness of Arnheim, you have been bred and brought up in the bosom of the Swiss hills, and should conduct yourself like an honest and well-meaning damsel."

"And in what does your wisdom reprehend my folly, good Mademoiselle Annette?" replied the baroness.

"Ay, marry! now our noble blood stirs in our veins. But remember, gentle my lady, that it was a bargain between us, when I left yonder noble mountains, and the free air that blows over them, to coop myself up in this land of prisons and slaves, that I should speak my mind to you as freely as I did when our heads lay on the same pillow."

"Speak, then," said Anne, studiously averting her face as she prepared to listen; but beware that you say nothing which it is unfit for me to hear."

"I will speak nature and common sense; and if your noble ears are not made fit to hear and understand these, the fault lies in them, and not in my tongue. Look you, you have saved this youth from two great dangers—one at the earth-shoot at Geierstein, the other this very day, when his life was beset. A handsome young man he is, well spoken and well qualified to gain deservedly a lady's favor. Before you saw him, the Swiss youth were at least not odious to you. You danced with them, you jested with them, you were the general object of their admiration; and, as you well know, you might have had your choice through the canton. Why, I think it possible a little urgency might have brought you to think of Rudolph Donnerhugel as your mate."

"Never, wench—never!" exclaimed Anne.

"Be not so very positive, my lady. Had he recommended himself to the uncle in the first place, I think, in my poor sentiment, he might at some lucky moment have carried the niece. But since we have known this young Englishman, it has been little less than contemning, despising, and something like hating, all the men whom you could endure well enough before."

"Well—well," said Anne, "I will detest and hate thee more than any of them, unless you bring your matters to an end."

"Softly, noble lady, fair and easy go far. All this argues you love the young man, and let those say that you are wrong who think there is anything wonderful in the matter. There is much to justify you, and nothing that I know against it."

"What, foolish girl! Remember my birth forbids me to love a mean man, my condition to love a poor man, my father's commands to love one whose addresses are without his consent; above all, my maidenly pride forbids me fixing my affections on one who cares not for me—nay, perhaps, is prejudiced against me by appearances."

"Here is a fine homily!" said Annette; "but I can clear every point of it as easily as Father Francis does his text in a holiday sermon. Your birth is a silly dream, which you have only learned to value within these two or three days, when, having come to German soil, some of the old German weed, usually called family pride, has begun to germinate in your heart. Think of such folly as you thought when you lived at Geierstein—that is, during all the rational part of your life—and this great terrible prejudice will sink into nothing. By condition, I conceive you mean estate. But Philipson's father, who is the most free-hearted of men, will surely give his son as many zecchins as will stock a mountain farm. You have firewood for the cutting, and land for the occupying, since you are surely entitled to part of Geierstein, and gladly will your uncle put you in possession of it. You can manage the dairy, Arthur can shoot, hunt, fish, plow, harrow, and reap."

Anne of Geierstein shook her head, as if she greatly doubted her lover's skill in the last of the accomplishments enumerated.

"Well—well, he can learn, then," said Anne Veilchen; "and you will only live the harder the first year or so. Besides, Sigismund Biederman will aid him willingly, and he is a very horse at labor; and I know another besides who is a friend——"

"Of thine own, I warrant," quoth the young baroness.

"Marry, it is my poor friend, Louis [Martin] Sprenger; and I'll never be so false-hearted as to deny my bachelor."

"Well—well, but what is to be the end of all this?" said the baroness, impatiently.

"The end of it, in my opinion," said Annette, "is very simple. Here are priests and prayer-books within a mile; go down to the parlor, speak your mind to your lover, or hear him speak his mind to you; join hands, go quietly back to Geierstein in the character of man and wife, and get everything ready to receive your uncle on his return. This is the way that a plain Swiss wench would cut off the romance of a German baroness——"

"And break the heart of her father," said the young lady, with a sigh.

"It is more tough than you are aware of," replied Annette; "he hath not lived without you so long, but that he will be able to spare you for the rest of his life, a great deal more easily than you, with all your newfangled ideas of quality, will be able to endure his schemes of wealth and ambition,

which will aim at making you the wife of some illustrious count, like De Hagenbach, whom we saw not long since make such an edifying end, to the great example of all robber-chivalry upon the Rhine."

"Thy plan is naught, wench—a childish vision of a girl who never knew more of life than she has heard told over her milking-pail. Remember that my uncle entertains the highest ideas of family discipline, and that to act contrary to my father's will would destroy us in his good opinion. Why else am I here? Wherefore has he resigned his guardianship? and why am I obliged to change the habits that are dear to me, and assume the manners of a people that are strange, and therefore unpleasing to me?"

"Your uncle," said Annette, firmly, "is Landamman of the Canton of Underwalden, respects its freedom, and is the sworn protector of its laws, of which, when you, a denizen of the Confederacy, claim the protection, he cannot refuse it to you."

"Even then," said the young baroness, "I should forfeit his good opinion, his more than paternal affection; but it is needless to dwell upon this. Know that, although I could have loved the young man, whom I will not deny to be as amiable as your partiality paints him—know"—she hesitated for a moment—"that he has never spoken a word to me on such a subject as you, without knowing either his sentiments or mine, would intrude on my consideration."

"Is it possible?" answered Annette. "I thought—I believed, though I have never pressed on your confidence—that you must—attached as you were to each other—have spoken together, like true maid and true bachelor, before now. I have done wrong, when I thought to do for the best. Is it possible—such things have been heard of even in our canton—is it possible he can have harbored so unutterably base purposes as that Martin of Brisach, who made love to Adela of the Sungau, enticed her to folly—the thing, though almost incredible, is true—fled—fled from the country and boasted of his villainy, till her cousin Raymund silenced forever his infamous triumph, by beating his brains out with his club, even in the very street of the villain's native town? By the Holy Mother of Einsiedlen! could I suspect this Englishman of meditating such treason, I would saw the plank across the moat till a fly's weight would break it, and it should be at six fathom deep that he should abye the perfidy which dared to meditate dishonor against an adopted daughter of Switzerland!"

As Annette Veilchen spoke, all the fire of her mountain courage flashed from her eyes, and she listened reluctantly while Anne of Geierstein endeavored to obliterate the dangerous impression which her former words had impressed on her simple but faithful attendant.

"On my word," she said—"on my soul, you do Arthur Philipson injustice—foul injustice, in intimating such a suspicion. His conduct towards me has ever been upright and honorable: a friend to a friend—a brother to a sister—could not, in all he has done and said, have been more respectful, more anxiously affectionate, more undeviatingly candid. In our frequent interviews and intercourse he has indeed seemed very kind—very attached. But had I been disposed—at times I may have been too much so—to listen to him with endurance,"—the young lady here put her hand on her forehead, but the tears streamed through her slender fingers—"he has never spoken of any love—any preference; if he indeed entertains any, some obstacle, insurmountable on his part, has interfered to prevent him."

"Obstacle!" replied the Swiss damsel. "Ay, doubtless—some childish bashfulness—some foolish idea about your birth being so high above his own—some dream of modesty pushed to extremity, which considers as impenetrable the ice of a spring frost. This delusion may be broken by a moment's encouragement, and I will take the task on myself, to spare your blushes, my dearest Anne."

"No—no—for Heaven's sake, no, Veilchen!" answered the baroness, to whom Annette had so long been a companion and confidante, rather than a domestic. "You cannot anticipate the nature of the obstacles which may prevent his thinking on what you are so desirous to promote. Hear me. My early education, and the instructions of my kind uncle, have taught me to know something more of foreigners and their fashions than I ever could have learned in our happy retirement of Geierstein; I am wellnigh convinced that these Philipsons are of rank, as they are of manners and bearing, far superior to the occupation which they appear to hold. The father is a man of deep observation, of high thought and pretension, and lavish of gifts, far beyond what consists with the utmost liberality of a trader."

"That is true," said Annette; "I will say for myself, that the silver chain he gave me weighs against ten silver crowns, and the cross which Arthur added to it, the day after the long ride we had together up towards Mont Pilatre,

is worth, they tell me, as much more. There is not the like of it in the cantons. Well, what then? They are rich, so are you. So much the better."

"Alas! Annette, they are not only rich, but noble. I am persuaded of this; for I have observed often that even the father retreated, with an air of quiet and dignified contempt, from discussions with Donnerhugel and others, who, in our plain way, wished to fasten a dispute upon him. And when a rude observation or blunt pleasantry was pointed at the son, his eye flashed, his cheek colored, and it was only a glance from his father which induced him to repress the retort of no friendly character which rose to his lips."

"You have been a close observer," said Annette. "All this may be true, but I noted it not. But what then, I say once more? If Arthur has some fine noble name in his own country, are not you yourself Baroness of Arnheim? And I will frankly allow it as something of worth, if it smooths the way to a match where I think you must look for happiness. I hope so, else I am sure it should have no encouragement from me."

"I do believe so, my faithful Veilchen; but alas! how can you, in the state of natural freedom in which you have been bred, know, or even dream, of the various restraints which this gilded or golden chain of rank and nobility hangs upon those whom it fetters and encumbers, I fear, as much as it decorates? In every country the distinction of rank binds me to certain duties. It may carry with it restrictions, which may prevent alliances in foreign countries; it often may prevent them from consulting their inclinations when they wed in their own. It leads to alliances in which the heart is never consulted, to treaties of marriage which are often formed when the parties are in the cradle, or in leading-strings, but which are not the less binding on them in honor and faith. Such may exist in the present case. These alliances are often blended and mixed up with state policy; and if the interests of England, or what he deems such, should have occasioned the elder Philipson to form such an engagement, Arthur would break his own heart—the heart of any one else—rather than make false his father's word."

"The more shame to them that formed such an engagement!" said Annette. "Well, they talk of England being a free country; but if they can bar young men and women of the natural privilege to call their hands and hearts their own, I would as soon be a German serf. Well, lady, you are

wise, and I am ignorant. But what is to be done? I have brought this young man here, expecting, God knows, a happier issue to your meeting. But it is clear you cannot marry him without his asking you. Now, although I confess that, if I could think him willing to forfeit the hand of the fairest maid of the cantons, either from want of manly courage to ask it or from regard to some ridiculous engagement formed betwixt his father and some other nobleman of their island of noblemen, I would not in either case grudge him a ducking in the moat; yet it is another question whether we should send him down to be murdered among those cutthroats of the Rhinegrave; and unless we do so I know not how to get rid of him.

"Then let the boy William give attendance on him here, and do you see to his accommodation. It is best we do not meet."

"I will," said Annette; "yet what am I to say for you? Unhappily, I let him know that you were here."

"Alas, imprudent girl! Yet why should I blame thee," said Anne of Geierstein, "when the imprudence has been so great on my own side? It is myself who, suffering my imagination to rest too long upon this young man and his merits, have led me into this entanglement. But I will show thee that I can overcome this folly, and I will not seek in my own error a cause for evading the duties of hospitality. Go, Veilchen, get some refreshment ready. Thou shalt sup with us, and thou must not leave us. Thou shalt see me behave as becomes both a German lady and a Swiss maiden. Get me first a candle, however, my girl, for I must wash these telltales, my eyes, and arrange my dress."

To Annette this whole explanation had been one scene of astonishment, for, in the simple ideas of love and courtship in which she had been brought up amid the Swiss mountains, she had expected that the two lovers would have taken the first opportunity of the absence of their natural guardians, and have united themselves forever; and she had even arranged a little secondary plot, in which she herself and Martin Sprenger, her faithful bachelor, were to reside with the young couple as friends and dependants. Silenced, therefore, but not satisfied, by the objections of her young mistress, the zealous Annette retreated, murmuring to herself—"That little hint about her dress is the only natural and sensible word she has said in my hearing. Please God, I will return and help her in the twinkling of an eye. That dressing my mistress is the only part of a waiting-lady's life that I have

the least fancy for: it seems so natural for one pretty maiden to set off another—in faith we are but learning to dress ourselves at another time."

And with this sage remark Annette Vielchen tripped down-stairs.

CHAPTER XXII

Tell me not of it—I could ne'er abide
The mummery of all that forced civility.
"Pray, seat yourself, my lord." With cringing hams
The speech is spoken, and, with bended knee,
Heard by the smiling courtier. 'Before you, sir?
It must he on the earth then." Hang it all!
The pride which cloaks itself in such poor fashion
Is scarcely fit to swell a beggar's bosom.

Old Play.

UP-STAIRS and down-stairs tripped Annette Veilchen, the soul of all that was going on in the only habitable corner of the huge castle of Arnheim. She was equal to every kind of service, and therefore popped her head into the stable to be sure that William attended properly to Arthur's horse, looked into the kitchen to see that the old cook, Marthon, roasted the partridges in due time (an interference for which she received little thanks), rummaged out a flask or two of Rhine wine from the huge Dom Daniel of a cellar, and, finally, just peeped into the parlor to see how Arthur was looking; when, having the satisfaction to see he had in the best manner he could sedulously arranged his person, she assured him that he should shortly see her mistress, who was rather indisposed, yet could not refrain from coming down to see so valued an acquaintance.

Arthur blushed when she spoke thus, and seemed so handsome in the waiting-maid's eye, that she could not help saying to herself, as she went to her young lady's room—"Well, if true love cannot manage to bring that couple together, in spite of all the obstacles that they stand boggling at, I will never believe that there is such a thing as true love in the world, let Martin Sprenger say what he will, and swear to it on the Gospels."

When she reached the young baroness's apartment, she found, to her surprise, that, instead of having put on what finery she possessed, that young lady's choice had preferred the same simple kirtle which she had worn during the first day that Arthur had dined at Geierstein. Annette looked at first puzzled and doubtful, then suddenly recognized the

good taste which had dictated the attire, and exclaimed, "You are right—you are right : it is best to meet him as a free-hearted Swiss maiden."

Anne also smiled as she replied, "But, at the same time, in the walls of Arnheim, I must appear in some respect as the daughter of my father. Here, girl, aid me to put this gem upon the ribbon which binds my hair."

It was an aigrette, or plume, composed of two feathers of a vulture, fastened together by an opal, which changed to the changing light with a variability which enchanted the Swiss damsel, who had never seen anything resembling it in her life.

"Now, Baroness Anne," said she, "if that pretty thing be really worn as a sign of your rank, it is the only thing belonging to your dignity that I should ever think of coveting; for it doth shimmer and change color after a most wonderful fashion, even something like one's own cheek when one is fluttered."

"Alas, Annette!" said the baroness, passing her hand across her eyes, "of all the gauds which the females of my house have owned, this perhaps hath been the most fatal to its possessors."

"And why then wear it?" said Annette. "Why wear it now, of all days in the year?"

"Because it best reminds me of my duty to my father and family. And now, girl, look thou sit with us at table, and leave not the apartment; and see thou fly not to and fro to help thyself or others with anything on the board, but remain quiet and seated till William helps you to what you have occasion for."

"Well, that is a gentle fashion which I like well enough," said Annette, "and William serves us so debonairly, that it is a joy to see him; yet, ever and anon, I feel as I were not Annette Veilchen herself, but only Annette Veilchen's picture, since I can neither rise, sit down, run about, or stand still without breaking some rule of courtly breeding. It is not so, I daresay with you, who are always mannerly."

"Less courtly than thou seemest to think," said the high-born maiden; "but I feel the restraint more on the green-sward, and under heaven's free air, than when I undergo it closed within the walls of an apartment."

"Ah, true—the dancing," said Annette; "that was something to be sorry for indeed."

"But most am I sorry, Annette, that I cannot tell whether I act precisely right or wrong in seeing this young man,

though it must be for the last time. Were my father to arrive? Were Ital Schreckenwald to return——"

"Your father is too deeply engaged on some of his dark and mystic errands," said the flippant Swiss—"sailed to the mountains of the Brockenberg, where witches hold their sabbath, or gone on a hunting-party with the Wild Huntsman."

"Fie, Annette, how dare you talk thus of my father?"

"Why, I know little of him personally," said the damsel, "and you yourself do not know much more. And how should that be false which all men say is true?"

"Why, fool, what do they say?"

"Why, that the count is a wizard, that your grandmother was a will-of-wisp, and old Ital Schreckenwald a born devil incarnate; and there is some truth in that, whatever comes of the rest."

"Where is he?"

"Gone down to spend the night in the village, to see the Rhinegrave's men quartered, and keep them in some order, if possible; for the soldiers are disappointed of pay which they had been promised; and when this happens, nothing resembles a lanzknecht except a chafed bear."

"Go we down then, girl; it is perhaps the last night which we may spend for years with a certain degree of freedom."

I will not pretend to describe the marked embarrassment with which Arthur Philipson and Anne of Geierstein met: neither lifted their eyes, neither spoke intelligibly, as they greeted each other, and the maiden herself did not blush more deeply than her modest visitor; while the good-humored Swiss girl, whose ideas of love partook of the freedom of a more Arcadian country and its customs, looked on with eyebrows a little arched, much in wonder, and a little in contempt, at a couple who, as she might think, acted with such unnatural and constrained reserve. Deep was the reverence and the blush with which Arthur offered his hand to the young lady, and her acceptance of the courtesy had the same character of extreme bashfulness, agitation, and embarrassment. In short, though little or nothing intelligible passed between this very handsome and interesting couple, the interview itself did not on that account lose any interest. Arthur handed the maiden, as was the duty of a gallant of the day, into the next room, where their repast was prepared; and Annette, who watched with singular attention everything which occurred, felt with astonishment

that the forms and ceremonies of the higher orders of society had such an influence, even over her free-born mind, as the rites of the Druids over that of the Roman general, when he said—

I scorn them, yet they awe me.

"What can have changed them ?" said Annette. "When at Geierstein, they looked but like another girl and bachelor, only that Anne is so very handsome ; but now they move in time and manner as if they were leading a stately pavin, and behave to each other with as much formal respect as if he were Landamman of the Unterwalden and she the first lady of Berne. 'Tis all very fine, doubtless, but it is not the way that Martin Sprenger makes love."

Apparently, the circumstances in which each of the young people were placed recalled to them the habits of lofty, and somewhat formal, courtesy to which they might have been accustomed in former days ; and while the baroness felt it necessary to observe the strictest decorum, in order to qualify the reception of Arthur into the interior of her retreat, he, on the other hand, endeavored to show, by the profoundness of his respect, that he was incapable of misusing the kindness with which he had been treated. They placed themselves at table, scrupulously observing the distance which might become a "virtuous gentleman and maid." The youth William did the service of the entertainment with deftness and courtesy, as one well accustomed to such duty; and Annette, placing herself between them, and endeavoring, as closely as she could, to adhere to the ceremonies which she saw them observe, made practise of the civilities which were expected from the attendant of a baroness. Various, however, were the errors which she committed. Her demeanor in general was that of a greyhound in the slips, ready to start up every moment ; and she was only withheld by the recollection that she was to ask for that which she had far more mind to help herself to.

Other points of etiquette were transgressed in their turn, after the repast was over and the attendant had retired. The waiting damsel often mingled too unceremoniously in the conversation, and could not help calling her mistress by her Christian name of Anne, and, in defiance of all decorum, addressed her, as well as Philipson, with the pronoun "thou," which then, as well as now, was a dreadful solecism in German politeness. Her blunders were so far fortunate, that, by furnishing the young lady and Arthur with a topic foreign

to the peculiarities of their own situation, they enabled them to withdraw their attentions from its embarrassments, and to exchange smiles at poor Annette's expense. She was not long of perceiving this, and half nettled, half availing herself of the apology to speak her mind, said, with considerable spirit, "You have both been very merry, forsooth, at my expense, and all because I wished rather to rise and seek what I wanted than wait till the poor fellow who was kept trotting between the board and beauffet found leisure to bring it to me. You laugh at me now, because I call you by your names, as they were given to you in the blessed church at your christening; and because I say to you "thee" and "thou," addressing my Juncker and my Youngfrau as I would do if I were on my knees praying to Heaven. But for all your new-world fancies, I can tell you, you are but a couple of children, who do not know your own minds, and are jesting away the only leisure given you to provide for your own happiness. Nay, frown not, my sweet Mistress Baroness; I have looked at Mount Pilatre too often to fear a gloomy brow."

"Peace, Annette," said her mistress, "or quit the room."

"Were I not more your friend than I am my own," said the headstrong and undaunted Annette, "I would quit the room, and the castle to boot, and leave you to hold your house here with your amiable seneschal, Ital Schreckenwald."

"If not for love, yet for shame, for charity, be silent, or leave the room."

"Nay," said Annette, "my bolt is shot, and I have but hinted at what all upon Geierstein green said, the night when the bow of Buttisholz was bended. You know what the old saw says——"

"Peace—peace, for Heaven's sake, or I must needs fly!" said the young baroness.

"Nay, then," said Annette, considerably changing her tone, as if afraid that her mistress should actually retire, "if you must fly, necessity must have its course. I know no one who can follow. This mistress of mine, Signior Arthur, would require for her attendant, not a homely girl of flesh and blood like myself, but a waiting-woman with substance composed of gossamer, and breath supplied by the spirit of æther. Would you believe it, it is seriously held by many that she partakes of the race of spirits of the elements, which makes her so much more bashful than maidens of this everyday world?"

Anne of Geierstein seemed rather glad to lead away the

conversation from the turn which her wayward maiden had given to it, and to turn it on more indifferent subjects, though these were still personal to herself.

"Signior Arthur," she said, "thinks, perhaps, he has some room to nourish some such strange suspicion as your heedless folly expresses, and some fools believe, both in Germany and Switzerland. Confess, Signior Arthur, you thought strangely of me when I passed your guard upon the bridge of Graffslust, on the night last past."

The recollection of the circumstances which had so greatly surprised him at the time so startled Arthur, that it was with some difficulty he commanded himself, so as to attempt an answer at all; and what he did say on the occasion was broken and unconnected.

"I did hear, I own—that is, Rudolph Donnerhugel reported. But that I believed that you, gentle lady, were other than a Christian maiden——"

"Nay, if Rudolph were the reporter," said Annette, "you would hear the worst of my lady and her lineage, that is certain. He is one of those prudent personages who depreciate and find fault with the goods he has thoughts of purchasing, in order to deter other offerers. Yes, he told you a fine goblin story, I warrant you, of my lady's grandmother; and truly, it so happened that the circumstances of the case gave, I daresay, some color in your eyes to——"

"Not so, Annette," answered Arthur; "whatever might be said of your lady that sounded uncouth and strange fell to the ground as incredible."

"Not quite so much so, I fancy," interrupted Annette, without heeding sign or frown. "I strongly suspect I should have had much more trouble in dragging you hither to this castle had you known you were approaching the haunt of the Nymph of the Fire, the Salamander, as they call her, not to mention the shock of again seeing the descendant of that Maiden of the Fiery Mantle."

"Peace, once more, Annette," said her mistress; "since Fate has occasioned this meeting, let us not neglect the opportunity to disabuse our English friend of the absurd report he has listened to with doubt and wonder perhaps, but not with absolute incredulity.

"Signior Arthur Philipson," she proceeded, "it is true my grandfather, by the mother's side, Baron Herman of Arnheim, was a man of great knowledge in abstruse sciences. He was also a presiding judge of a tribunal of which you must have heard, called the Holy Vehme. One night a

stranger, closely pursued by the agents of that body, which (crossing herself) it is not safe even to name, arrived at the castle and craved his protection, and the rights of hospitality. My grandfather, finding the advance which the stranger had made to the rank of adept, gave him his protection, and became bail to deliver him to answer the charge against him for a year and a day, which delay he was, it seems, entitled to require on his behalf. They studied together during that term, and pushed their researches into the mysteries of nature as far, in all probability, as men have the power of urging them. When the fatal day drew nigh on which the guest must part from his host, he asked permission to bring his daughter to the castle, that they might exchange a last farewell. She was introduced with much secrecy, and after some days, finding that her father's fate was so uncertain, the baron, with the sage's consent, agreed to give the forlorn maiden refuge in his castle, hoping to obtain from her some additional information concerning the languages and the wisdom of the East. Dannischemend, her father, left this castle, to go to render himself up to the Vehmegericht at Fulda. The result is unknown; perhaps he was saved by Baron Arnheim's testimony, perhaps he was given up to the steel and the cord. On such matters, who dare speak?

"The fair Persian became the wife of her guardian and protector. Amid many excellences, she had one peculiarity allied to imprudence. She availed herself of her foreign dress and manners, as well as of a beauty which was said to have been marvelous, and an agility seldom equaled, to impose upon and terrify the ignorant German ladies, who, hearing her speak Persian and Arabic, were already disposed to consider her as over-closely connected with unlawful arts. She was of a fanciful and imaginative disposition, and delighted to place herself in such colors and circumstances as might confirm their most ridiculous suspicions, which she considered only as matter of sport. There was no end to the stories to which she gave rise. Her first appearance in the castle was said to be highly picturesque, and to have inferred something of the marvelous. With the levity of a child, she had some childish passions, and while she encouraged the growth and circulation of the most extraordinary legends amongst some of the neighborhood, she entered into disputes with persons of her own quality concerning rank and precedence, on which the ladies of Westphalia have at all times set great store. This cost her her life; for, on the

morning of the christening of my poor mother, the Baroness of Arnheim died suddenly, even while a splendid company was assembled in the castle chapel to witness the ceremony. It was believed that she died of poison, administered by the Baroness Steinfeldt, with whom she was engaged in a bitter quarrel, entered into chiefly on behalf of her friend and companion, the Countess Waldstetten."

"And the opal gem?—and the sprinkling with water?" said Arthur Philipson.

"Ah!" replied the young baroness, "I see you desire to hear the real truth of my family history, of which you have yet learned only the romantic legend. The sprinkling of water was necessarily had recourse to on my ancestress's first swoon. As for the opal, I have heard that it did indeed grow pale, but only because it is said to be the nature of that noble gem, on the approach of poison. Some part of the quarrel with the Baroness Steinfeldt was about the right of the Persian maiden to wear this stone, which an ancestor of my family won in battle from the Soldan of Trebizond. All these things were confused in popular tradition, and the real facts turned into a fairy tale."

"But you have said nothing," suggested Arthur Philipson, "on—on——"

"On what?" said his hostess.

"On your appearance last night."

"Is it possible," said she, "that a man of sense, and an Englishman, cannot guess at the explanation which I have to give, though not, perhaps, very distinctly? My father, you are aware, has been a busy man in a disturbed country, and has incurred the hatred of many powerful persons. He is, therefore, obliged to move in secret, and avoid unnecessary observation. He was, besides, averse to meet his brother, the Landamman, I was therefore told, on our entering Germany, that I was to expect a signal where and when to join him; the token was to be a small crucifix of bronze, which had belonged to my poor mother. In my apartment at Graffslust I found the token, with a note from my father, making me acquainted with a secret passage proper to such places, which, though it had the appearance of being blocked up, was in fact very slightly barricaded. By this I was instructed to pass to the gate, make my escape into the woods, and meet my father at a place appointed there."

"A wild and perilous adventure," said Arthur.

"I have never been so much shocked," continued the

maiden, "as at receiving this summons, compelling me to steal away from my kind and affectionate uncle, and go I knew not whither. Yet compliance was absolutely necessary. The place of meeting was plainly pointed out. A midnight walk, in the neighborhood of protection, was to me a trifle; but the precaution of posting sentinels at the gate might have interfered with my purpose, had I not mentioned it to some of my elder cousins, the Biedermans, who readily agreed to let me pass and repass unquestioned. But you know my cousins; honest and kind-hearted, they are of a rude way of thinking, and as incapable of feeling a generous delicacy as—some other persons. (Here there was a glance towards Annette Veilchen.) They exacted from me, that I should conceal myself and my purpose from Sigismund; and, as they are always making sport with the simple youth, they insisted that I should pass him in such a manner as might induce him to believe that I was a spiritual apparition, and out of his terrors for supernatural beings they expected to have much amusement. I was obliged to secure their connivance at my escape on their own terms; and, indeed, I was too much grieved at the prospect of quitting my kind uncle to think much of anything else. Yet my surprise was considerable, when, contrary to expectation, I found you on the bridge as sentinel, instead of my cousin Sigismund. Your own ideas I ask not for."

"They were those of a fool," said Arthur—"of a thrice-sodden fool. Had I been aught else, I would have offered my escort. My sword——"

"I could not have accepted your protection," said Anne, calmly. "My mission was in every respect a secret one. I met my father; some intercourse had taken place betwixt him and Rudolph Donnerhugel, which induced him to alter his purpose of carrying me away with him last night. I joined him, however, early this morning, while Annette acted for a time my part amongst the Swiss pilgrims. My father desired that it should not be known when or with whom I left my uncle and his escort. I need scarce remind you that I saw you in the dungeon."

"You were the preserver of my life," said the youth, "the restorer of my liberty."

"Ask me not the reason of my silence. I was then acting under the agency of others, not under mine own. Your escape was effected in order to establish a communication betwixt the Swiss without the fortress and the soldiers within. After the alarm at La Ferette, I learned from Sigismund

Biederman that a party of banditti were pursuing your father and you, with a view to pillage and robbery. My father had furnished me with the means of changing Anne of Geierstein into a German maiden of quality. I set out instantly, and glad I am to have given you a hint which might free you from danger."

"But my father?" said Arthur.

"I have every reason to hope he is well and safe," answered the young lady. "More than I were eager to protect both you and him—poor Sigismund amongst the first. And now, my friend, these mysteries explained, it is time we part, and forever."

"Part, and forever!" repeated the youth, in a voice like a dying echo.

"It is our fate," said the maiden. "I appeal to you if it is not your duty—I tell you it is mine. You will depart with early dawn to Strasburg—and—and—we never meet again."

With an ardor of passion which he could not repress, Arthur Philipson threw himself at the feet of the maiden, whose faltering tone had clearly expressed that she felt deeply in uttering the words. She looked round for Annette, but Annette had disappeared at this most critical moment; and her mistress for a second or two was not perhaps sorry for her absence.

"Rise," she said, "Arthur—rise. You must not give way to feelings that might be fatal to yourself and me."

"Hear me, lady, before I bid you adieu, and forever: the word of a criminal is heard, though he plead the worst cause. I am a belted knight, and the son and heir of an earl, whose name has been spread throughout England and France, and wherever valor has had fame."

"Alas!" said she, faintly, "I have but too long suspected what you now tell me. Rise, I pray you—rise."

"Never till you hear me," said the youth, seizing one of her hands, which trembled, but hardly could be said to struggle, in his grasp. "Hear me," he said, with the enthusiasm of first love, when the obstacles of bashfulness and diffidence are surmounted; "my father and I are—I acknowledge it—bound on a most hazardous and doubtful expedition. You will very soon learn its issue for good or bad. If it succeed, you shall hear of me in my own character. If I fall, I must—I will—I do claim a tear from Anne of Geierstein. If I escape, I have yet a horse, a lance, and a sword; and you shall hear nobly of him whom you have thrice protected from imminent danger."

"Arise—arise," repeated the maiden, whose tears began to flow fast, as, struggling to raise her lover, they fell thick upon his head and face. "I have heard enough; to listen to more were indeed madness, both for you and myself."

"Yet one single word," added the youth; "while Arthur has a heart, it beats for you; while Arthur can wield an arm, it strikes for you, and in your cause."

Annette now rushed into the room.

"Away—away!" she cried. "Schreckenwald has returned from the village with some horrible tidings, and I fear me he comes this way."

Arthur had started to his feet at the first signal of alarm.

"If there is danger near your lady, Annette, there is at least one faithful friend by her side."

Annette looked anxiously at her mistress.

"But Schreckenwald," she said—"Schreckenwald, your father's steward—his confidant. O, think better of it; I can hide Arthur somewhere."

The noble-minded girl had already resumed her composure, and replied with dignity. "I have done nothing," she said, "to offend my father. If Schreckenwald be my father's steward, he is my vassal. I hide no guest to conciliate him. Sit down (addressing Arthur), and let us receive this man. Introduce him instantly, Annette, and let us hear his tidings; and bid him remember that, when he speaks to me, he addresses his mistress."

Arthur resumed his seat, still more proud of his choice from the noble and fearless spirit displayed by one who had so lately shown herself sensible to the gentlest feelings of the female sex.

Annette, assuming courage from her mistress's dauntless demeanor, clapped her hands together as she left the room, saying, but in a low voice, "I see that, after all, it is something to be a baroness, if one can assert her dignity conformingly. How could I be so much frightened for this rude man!"

CHAPTER XXIII

Affairs that walk,
As they say spirits do, at midnight have
In them a wilder nature than the business
That seeks dispatch by day.

Henry VIII. Act V.

THE approach of the steward was now boldly expected by the little party. Arthur, flattered at once and elevated by the firmness which Anne had shown when this person's arrival was announced, hastily considered the part which he was to act in the approaching scene, and prudently determined to avoid all active and personal interference, till he should observe, from the demeanor of Anne, that such was likely to be useful or agreeable to her. He resumed his place, therefore, at a distant part of the board, on which their meal had been lately spread, and remained there, determined to act in the manner Anne's behavior should suggest as most prudent and fitting—veiling, at the same time, the most acute internal anxiety by an appearance of that deferential composure which one of inferior rank adopts when admitted to the presence of a superior. Anne, on her part, seemed to prepare herself for an interview of interest. An air of conscious dignity succeeded the extreme agitation which she had so lately displayed, and, busying herself with some articles of female work, she also seemed to expect with tranquillity the visit to which her attendant was disposed to attach so much alarm.

A step was heard upon the stair, hurried and unequal, as that of some one in confusion as well as haste ; the door flew open, and Ital Schreckenwald entered.

This person, with whom the details given to the elder Philipson by the Landamman Biederman have made the reader in some degree acquainted, was a tall, well-made soldierly-looking man. His dress, like that of persons of rank at the period in Germany, was more varied in color, more cut and ornamented, slashed and jagged, than the habit worn in France and England. The never-failing hawk's feather decked his cap, secured with a medal of gold, which served as a clasp. His doublet was of buff, for defense, but "laid down," as it was called in the tailors' craft, with

rich lace on each seam, and displaying on the breast a golden chain, the emblem of his rank in the baron's household. He entered with rather a hasty step, and busy and offended look, and said, somewhat rudely—"Why, how now, young lady—wherefore this? Strangers in the castle at this period of night!"

Anne of Geierstein, though she had been long absent from her native country, was not ignorant of its habits and customs, and knew the haughty manner in which all who were noble exerted their authority over their dependants.

"Are you a vassal of Arnheim, Ital Schreckenwald, and do you speak to the Lady of Arnheim in her own castle with an elevated voice, a saucy look, and bonneted withal? Know your place; and, when you have demanded pardon for your insolence, and told your errand in such terms as befit your condition and mine, I may listen to what you have to say."

Schreckenwald's hand, in spite of him, stole to his bonnet, and uncovered his haughty brow.

"Noble lady," he said, in a somewhat milder tone, "excuse me if my haste be unmannerly, but the alarm is instant. The soldiery of the Rhinegrave have mutinied, plucked down the banners of their master, and set up an independent ensign, which they call the pennon of St. Nicholas, under which they declare that they will maintain peace with God and war with all the world. This castle cannot escape them, when they consider that the first course to maintain themselves must be to take possession of some place of strength. You must up, then, and ride with the very peep of dawn. For the present, they are busy with the wine-skins of the peasants, but when they wake in the morning they will unquestionably march hither; and you may chance to fall into the hands of those who will think of the terrors of the Castle of Arnheim as the figments of a fairy tale, and laugh at its mistress's pretensions to honor and respect."

"Is it impossible to make resistance? The castle is strong," said the young lady, "and I am unwilling to leave the house of my fathers without attempting somewhat in our defense."

"Five hundred men," said Schreckenwald, "might garrison Arnheim, battlement and tower. With a less number it were madness to attempt to keep such an extent of walls; and how to get twenty soldiers together, I am sure I know not. So, having now the truth of the story, let me beseech you to dismiss this guest—too young, I think, to be the in-

mate of a lady's bower—and I will point to him the nighest way out of the castle; for this is a strait in which we must all be contented with looking to our own safety."

"And whither is it that you propose to go?" said the baroness, continuing to maintain, in respect to Ital Schreckenwald, the complete and calm assertion of absolute superiority, to which the seneschal gave way with such marks of impatience as a fiery steed exhibits under the management of a complete cavalier.

"To Strasburg I propose to go—that is, if it so please you—with such slight escort as I can get hastily together by daybreak. I trust we may escape being observed by the mutineers; or, if we fall in with a party of stragglers, I apprehend but little difficulty in forcing my way."

"And wherefore do you prefer Strasburg as a place of asylum?"

"Because I trust we shall there meet your Excellency's father, the noble Count Albert of Geierstein."

"It is well," said the young lady. "You also, I think, Signior Philipson, spoke of directing your course to Strasburg. If it consist with your convenience, you may avail yourself of the protection of my escort as far as that city, where you expect to meet your father."

It will readily be believed that Arthur cheerfully bowed assent to a proposal which was to prolong their remaining in society together; and might possibly, as his romantic imagination suggested, afford him an opportunity, on a road beset with dangers, to render some service of importance.

Ital Schreckenwald attempted to remonstrate.

"Lady—lady!" he said, with some marks of impatience.

"Take breath and leisure, Schreckenwald," said Anne, "and you will be more able to express yourself with distinctness and with respectful propriety."

The impatient vassal muttered an oath betwixt his teeth, and answered with forced civility—"Permit me to state, that our case requires we should charge ourselves with the care of no one but you. We shall be few enough for your defense, and I cannot permit any stranger to travel with us."

"If," said Arthur, "I conceived that I was to be a useless encumbrance on the retreat of this noble young lady, worlds, sir squire, would not induce me to accept her offer. But I am neither child nor woman: I am a full-grown man, and ready to show such good service as manhood may in defence of your lady."

"If we must not challenge your valor and ability, young sir," said Schreckenwald, "who shall answer for your fidelity?"

"To question that elsewhere," said Arthur, "might be dangerous."

But Anne interfered between them. "We must straight to rest, and remain prompt for alarm, perhaps even before the hour of dawn. Schreckenwald, I trust to your care for due watch and ward. You have men enough at least for that purpose. And hear and mark—it is my desire and command that this gentleman be accommodated with lodgings here for this night, and that he travel with us to-morrow. For this I will be responsible to my father, and your part is only to obey my commands. I have long had occasion to know both the young man's father and himself, who were ancient guests of my uncle, the Landamman. On the journey you will keep the youth beside you, and use such courtesy to him as your rugged temper will permit."

Ital Schreckenwald intimated his acquiescence with a look of bitterness, which it were vain to attempt to describe. It expressed spite, mortification, humbled pride, and reluctant submission. He did submit, however, and ushered young Philipson into a decent apartment with a bed, which the fatigue and agitation of the preceding day rendered very acceptable.

Notwithstanding the ardor with which Arthur expected the rise of the next dawn, his deep repose, the fruit of fatigue, held him until the reddening of the east, when the voice of Schreckenwald exclaimed, "Up, sir Englishman, if you mean to accomplish your boast of loyal service. It is time we were in the saddle, and we shall tarry for no sluggards."

Arthur was on the floor of the apartment, and dressed, in almost an instant, not forgetting to put on his shirt of mail, and assume whatever weapons seemed most fit to render him an efficient part of the convoy. He next hastened to seek out the stable, to have his horse in readiness; and, descending for that purpose into the under story of the lower mass of buildings, he was wandering in search of the way which led to the offices, when the voice of Annette Veilchen softly whispered, "This way, Signior Philipson; I would speak with you."

The Swiss maiden, at the same time, beckoned him into a small room, where he found her alone.

"Were you not surprised," she said, "to see my lady queen it so over Ital Schreckenwald, who keeps every

other person in awe with his stern looks and cross words? But the air of command seems so natural to her that, instead of being a baroness, she might have been an empress. It must come of birth, I think, after all, for I tried last night to take state upon me, after the fashion of my mistress, and would you think it, the brute Schreckenwald threatened to throw me out of the window? But if ever I see Martin Sprenger again, I'll know if there is strength in a Swiss arm, and virtue in a Swiss quarter-staff. But here I stand prating, and my lady wishes to see you for a minute ere we take to horse."

"Your lady!" said Arthur, starting. "Why did you lose an instant?—why not tell me before?"

"Because I was only to keep you here till she came, and—here she is."

Anne of Geierstein entered, fully attired for her journey. Annette, always willing to do as she would wish to be done by, was about to leave the apartment, when her mistress who had apparently made up her mind concerning what she had to do or say, commanded her positively to remain.

"I am sure," she said, "Signor Philipson will rightly understand the feelings of hospitality—I will say of friendship—which prevented my suffering him to be expelled from my castle last night, and which have determined me this morning to admit of his company on the somewhat dangerous road to Strasburg. At the gate of that town we part, I to join my father, you to place yourself under the direction of yours. From that moment intercourse between us ends, and our remembrance of each other must be as the thoughts which we pay to friends deceased."

"Tender recollections," said Arthur, passionately, "more dear to our bosoms than all we have surviving upon earth."

"Not a word in that tone," answered the maiden. "With night delusion should end, and reason awaken with dawning. One word more. Do not address me on the road; you may, by doing so, expose me to vexatious and insulting suspicion, and yourself to quarrels and peril. Farewell, our party is ready to take horse."

She left the apartment, where Arthur remained for a moment deeply bewildered in grief and disappointment. The patience, may, even favor, with which Anne of Geierstein had, on the previous night, listened to his passion had not prepared him for the terms of reserve and distance which she now adopted towards him. He was ignorant that noble maids, if feeling or passion has for a moment swayed them from the strict path of principle and duty, endeavor to atone

for it by instantly returning, and severely adhering, to the line from which they have made a momentary departure. He looked mournfully on Annette, who, as she had been in the room before Anne's arrival, took the privilege of remaining a minute after her departure ; but he read no comfort in the glances of the confidante, who seemed as much disconcerted as himself.

"I cannot imagine what hath happened to her," said Annette ; "to me she is kind as ever, but to every other person about her she plays countess and baroness with a witness ; and now she is begun to tyrannize over her own natural feelings, and—if this be greatness, Annette Veilchen trusts always to remain the penniless Swiss girl ; she is mistress of her own freedom, and at liberty to speak with her bachelor when she pleases, so as religion and maiden modesty suffer nothing in the conversation. Oh, a single daisy twisted with content into one's hair is worth all the opals in India, if they bind us to torment ourselves and other people, or hinder us from speaking our mind, when our heart is upon our tongue. But never fear, Arthur ; for, if she has the cruelty to think of forgetting you, you may rely on one friend who while she has a tongue and Anne has ears, will make it impossible for her to do so."

So saying, away tripped Annette, having first indicated to Philipson the passage by which he would find the lower court of the castle. There his steed stood ready, among about twenty others. Twelve of these were accoutered with war saddles and frontlets of proof, being intended for the use of as many cavaliers, or troopers, retainers of the family of Arnheim, whom the seneschal's exertions had been able to collect on the spur of the occasion. Two palfreys, somewhat distinguished by their trappings, were designed for Anne of Geierstein and her favorite female attendant. The other menials, chiefly boys and women servants, had inferior horses. At a signal made, the troopers took their lances and stood by their steeds, till the females and menials were mounted and in order ; they then sprang into their saddles and began to move forward, slowly and with great precaution. Schreckenwald led the van, and kept Arthur Philipson close beside him. Anne and her attendant were in the center of the little body, followed by the unwarlike train of servants, while two or three experienced cavaliers brought up the rear, with strict orders to guard against surprise.

On their being put into motion, the first thing which surprised Arthur was, that the horses' hoofs no longer sent

forth the sharp and ringing sound arising from the collision of iron and flint, and, as the morning light increased, he could perceive that the fetlock and hoof of every steed, his own included, had been carefully wrapped around with a sufficient quantity of wool to prevent the usual noise which accompanied their motions. It was a singular thing to behold the passage of the little body of cavalry down the rocky road which led from the castle, unattended with the noise which we are disposed to consider as inseparable from the motions of horse, the absence of which seemed to give a peculiar and almost an unearthly appearance to the cavalcade.

They passed in this manner the winding path which led from the Castle of Arnheim to the adjacent village, which, as was the ancient feudal custom, lay so near the fortress that its inhabitants, when summoned by their lord, could instantly repair for its defense. But it was at present occupied by very different inhabitants, the mutinous soldiers of the Rhinegrave. When the party from Arnheim approached the entrance of the village, Schreckenwald made a signal to halt, which was instantly obeyed by his followers. He then rode forward in person to reconnoiter, accompanied by Arthur Philipson, both moving with the utmost steadiness and precaution. The deepest silence prevailed in the deserted streets. Here and there a soldier was seen, seemingly designed for a sentinel, but uniformly fast asleep.

"The swinish mutineers!" said Schreckenwald; "a fair night-watch they keep, and a beautiful morning's rouse would I treat them with, were not the point to protect yonder peevish wench. Halt thou here, stranger, while I ride back and bring them on; there is no danger."

Schreckenwald left Arthur as he spoke, who, alone in the street of a village filled with banditti, though they were lulled into temporary insensibility, had no reason to consider his case as very comfortable. The chorus of a wassail song, which some reveler was trolling over in his sleep; or, in its turn, the growling of some village cur, seemed the signal for an hundred ruffians to start up around him. But in the space of two or three minutes the noiseless cavalcade, headed by Ital Schreckenwald, again joined him, and followed their leader, observing the utmost precaution not to give an alarm. All went well till they reached the farther end of the village, where, although the *baarenhauter* * who kept guard was as

* *Baarenhauter* [*Bärenhäuter*]—he of the bear's hide—a nickname for a German private soldier.

drunk as his companions on duty, a large shaggy dog which lay beside him was more vigilant. As the little troop approached, the animal sent forth a ferocious yell, loud enough to have broken the rest of the Seven Sleepers, and which effectually dispelled the slumbers of its master. The soldier snatched up his carabine and fired, he knew not well at what, or for what reason. The ball, however, struck Arthur's horse under him, and, as the animal fell, the sentinel rushed forward to kill or make prisoner the rider.

"Haste on—haste on, men of Arnheim! care for nothing but the young lady's safety," exclaimed the leader of the band.

"Stay, I command you; aid the stranger, on your lives!" said Anne, in a voice which, usually gentle and meek, she now made heard by those around her, like the note of a silver clarion. "I will not stir till he is rescued."

Schreckenwald had already spurred his horse for flight; but, perceiving Anne's reluctance to follow him, he dashed back, and seizing a horse, which, bridled and saddled, stood picqueted near him, he threw the reins to Arthur Philipson; and pushing his own horse, at the same time, betwixt the Englishman and the soldier, he forced the latter to quit the hold he had on his person. In an instant Philipson was again mounted, when, seizing a battle-ax which hung at the saddle-bow of his new steed, he struck down the staggering sentinel, who was endeavoring again to seize upon him. The whole troop then rode off at a gallop, for the alarm began to grow general in the village; some soldiers were seen coming out of their quarters, and others were beginning to get upon horseback. Before Schreckenwald and his party had ridden a mile, they heard more than once the sound of bugles; and when they arrived upon the summit of an eminence commanding a view of the village, their leader, who, during the retreat, had placed himself in the rear of his company, now halted to reconnoiter the enemy they had left behind them. There was bustle and confusion in the street, but there did not appear to be any pursuit; so that Schreckenwald followed his route down the river, with speed and activity indeed, but with so much steadiness at the same time as not to distress the slowest horse of his party.

When they had ridden two hours and more, the confidence of their leader was so much augmented, that he ventured to command a halt at the edge of a pleasant grove, which served to conceal their number, whilst both riders and horses took some refreshment, for which purpose forage and provisions

had been borne along with them. Ital Schreckenwald having held some communication with the baroness, continued to offer their traveling companion a sort of surly civility. He invited him to partake of his own mess, which was indeed little different from that which was served out to the other troopers, but was seasoned with a glass of wine from a more choice flask.

"To your health, brother," he said; "if you tell this day's story truly, you will allow that I was a true comrade to you two hours since, in riding through the village of Arnheim."

"I will never deny it, fair sir," said Philipson, "and I return you thanks for your timely assistance, alike whether it sprang from your mistress's order or your own goodwill."

"Ho! ho! my friend," said Schreckenwald, laughing, "you are a philosopher, and can try conclusions while your horse lies rolling above you, and a *barrenhauter* aims his sword at your throat? Well, since your wit hath discovered so much, I care not if you know that I should not have had much scruple to sacrifice twenty such smooth-faced gentlemen as yourself, rather than the young Baroness of Arnheim had incurred the slightest danger,"

"The propriety of the sentiment," said Philipson, "is so undoubtedly correct, that I subscribe to it, even though it is something discourteously expressed towards myself."

In making this reply, the young man, provoked at the insolence of Schreckenwald's manner, raised his voice a little. The circumstance did not escape observation, for on the instant Annette Veilchen stood before them, with her mistress's commands on them both to speak in whispers, or rather to be altogether silent.

"Say to your mistress that I am mute," said Philipson.

"Our mistress, the baroness, says," continued Annette, with an emphasis on the title, to which she began to ascribe some talismanic influence—"the baroness, I tell you, says, that silence much concerns our safety, for it were most hazardous to draw upon this little fugitive party the notice of any passengers who may pass along the road during the necessary halt; and so, sirs, it is the baroness's request that you will continue the exercise of your teeth as fast as you can, and forbear that of your tongues till you are in a safer condition."

"My lady is wise," answered Ital Schreckenwald, "and her maiden is witty. I drink, Mrs. Annette, in a cup of Rudesheimer, to the continuance of her sagacity, and of your

amiable liveliness of disposition. Will it please you, fair mistress, to pledge me in this generous liquor ?"

"Out, thou German wine-flask ! Out, thou eternal swill-flagon ! Heard you ever of a modest maiden who drank wine before she had dined ?"

"Remain without the generous inspiration, then," said the German, "and nourish thy satirical vein on sour cider or acid whey."

A short space having been allowed to refresh themselves, the little party again mounted their horses, and traveled with such speed, that long before noon they arrived at the strongly fortified town of Kehl, opposite to Strasburg, on the eastern bank of the Rhine.

It is for local antiquaries to discover whether the travelers crossed from Kehl to Strasburg by the celebrated bridge of boats which at present maintains the communication across the river, or whether they were wafted over by some other mode of transportation. It is enough that they passed in safety, and had landed on the other side, where—whether she dreaded that he might forget the charge she had given him, that here they were to separate, or whether she thought that something more might be said in the moment of parting —the young baroness, before remounting her horse, once more approached Arthur Philipson, who too truly guessed the tenor of what she had to say.

"Gentle stranger," she said, "I must now bid you farewell. But first let me ask if you know whereabouts you are to seek your father ?"

"In an inn called the Flying Stag," said Arthur, dejectedly ; "but where that is situated in this large town, I know not."

"Do you know the place, Ital Schreckenwald ?"

"I, young lady ? Not I—I know nothing of Strasburg and its inns. I believe most of our party are as ignorant as I am."

"You and they speak German, I suppose," said the baroness, dryly, "and can make inquiry more easily than a foreigner ? Go, sir, and forget not that humanity to the stranger is a religious duty."

With that shrug of the shoulders which testifies a displeased messenger, Ital went to make some inquiry, and in his absence, brief as it was, Anne took an opportunity to say apart—"Farewell—farewell ! Accept this token of friendship, and wear it for my sake. May you be happy !"

Her slender fingers dropped into his hand a very small

parcel. He turned to thank her, but she was already at some distance; and Schreckenwald, who had taken his place by his side, said in his harsh voice, "Come, sir squire, I have found out your place of rendezvous, and I have but little time to play the gentleman-usher."

He then rode on; and Philipson, mounted on his military charger, followed him in silence to the point where a large street joined, or rather crossed, that which led from the quay on which they had landed.

"Yonder swings the Flying Stag," said Ital, pointing to an immense sign, which, mounted on a huge wooden frame, crossed almost the whole breadth of the street. "Your intelligence can, I think, hardly abandon you, with such a guide-post in your eye."

So saying, he turned his horse without further farewell, and rode back to join his mistress and her attendants.

Philipson's eyes rested on the same group for a moment, when he was recalled to a sense of his situation by the thoughts of his father; and, spurring his jaded horse down the cross street, he reached the hostelry of the Flying Stag.

CHAPTER XXIV

I was, I must confess,
Fair Albion's queen in former golden days;
But now mischance hath trode my title down,
And with dishonor laid me in the dust,
Where I must take like seat unto my fortune,
And to my humble seat conform myself.
Henry IV. Part III.

THE hostelry of the Flying Stag, in Strasburg was, like every inn in the Empire at the period, conducted much with the same discourteous inattention to the wants and accommodation of the guests as that of John Mengs. But the youth and good looks of Arthur Philipson, circumstances which seldom or never fail to produce some effect where the fair are concerned, prevailed upon a short, plump, dimpled, blue-eyed, fair-skinned *yungfrau,* the daughter of the landlord of the Flying Stag, himself, a fat old man, pinned to the oaken chair in the *stube,* to carry herself to the young Englishman with a degree of condescension which, in the privileged race to which she belonged, was little short of degradation. She not only put her light buskins and her pretty ankles in danger of being soiled by tripping across the yard to point out an unoccupied stable, but, on Arthur's inquiry after his father, condescended to recollect that such a guest as he described had lodged in the house last night, and had said he expected to meet there a young person, his fellow-traveler.

"I will send him out to you, fair sir," said the little *yungfrau* with a smile, which, if things of the kind are to be valued by their rare occurrence, must have been reckoned inestimable.

She was as good as her word. In a few instants the elder Philipson entered the stable, and folded his son in his arms.

"My son—my dear son!" said the Englishman, his usual stoicism broken down and melted by natural feeling and parental tenderness. "Welcome to me at all times—welcome in a period of doubt and danger—and most welcome of all in a moment which forms the very crisis of our fate.

In a few hours I shall know what we may expect from the Duke of Burgundy. Hast thou the token?"

Arthur's hand first sought that which was nearest to his heart, both in the literal and allegorical sense, the small parcel, namely, which Anne had given him at parting. But he recollected himself in the instant, and presented to his father the packet which had been so strangely lost and recovered at La Ferette.

"It hath run its own risk since you saw it," he observed to his father, "and so have I mine. I received hospitality at a castle last night, and behold a body of lanzknechts in the neighborhood began in the morning to mutiny for their pay. The inhabitants fled from the castle to escape their violence, and, as we passed their leaguer in the gray of the morning, a drunken *baarenhauter* shot my poor horse, and I was forced, in the way of exchange, to take up with his heavy Flemish animal, with its steel saddle and its clumsy chaffron."

"Our road is beset with perils," said his father. "I too have had my share, having been in great danger (he told not its precise nature) at an inn where I rested last night. But I left it in the morning, and proceeded hither in safety. I have at length, however, obtained a safe escort to conduct me to the Duke's camp near Dijon; and I trust to have an audience of him this evening. Then, if our last hope should fail, we will seek the seaport of Marseilles, hoist sail for Candia or for Rhodes, and spend our lives in defense of Christendom, since we may no longer fight for England."

Arthur heard these ominous words without reply; but they did not the less sink upon his heart, deadly as the doom of the judge which secludes the criminal from society and all its joys, and condemns him to an eternal prison-house. The bells from the cathedral began to toll at this instant, and reminded the elder Philipson of the duty of hearing mass, which was said at all hours in some one or other of the separate chapels which are contained in that magnificent pile. His son followed, on an intimation of his pleasure.

In approaching the access to this superb cathedral, the travelers found it obstructed, as is usual in Catholic countries, by the number of mendicants of both sexes who crowded round the entrance to give the worshipers an opportunity of discharging the duty of almsgiving, so positively enjoined as a chief observance of their church. The Englishmen extricated themselves from their importunity by bestowing, as is usual on such occasions, a donative of small coin

upon those who appeared most needy, or most deserving of their charity. One tall woman stood on the steps close to the door, and extended her hand to the elder Philipson, who, struck with her appearance, exchanged for a piece of silver the copper coins which he had been distributing amongst others.

"A marvel!" she said, in the English language, but in a tone calculated only to be heard by him alone, although his son also caught the sound and sense of what she said—"ay, a miracle! An Englishman still possesses a silver piece, and can afford to bestow it on the poor!"

Arthur was sensible that his father started somewhat at the voice or words, which bore, even in his ear, something of deeper import than the observation of an ordinary mendicant. But, after a glance at the female who thus addressed him, his father passed onwards into the body of the church, and was soon engaged in attending to the solemn ceremony of the mass, as it was performed by a priest at the altar of a chapel divided from the main body of the splendid edifice, and dedicated, as it appeared from the image over the altar, to St. George—that military saint whose real history is so obscure, though his popular legend rendered him an object of peculiar veneration during the feudal ages. The ceremony was begun and finished with all customary forms. The officiating priest, with his attendants, withdrew, and though some of the few worshipers who had assisted at the solemnity remained telling their beads, and occupied with the performance of their private devotions, far the greater part left the chapel, to visit other shrines, or to return to the prosecution of their secular affairs.

But Arthur Philipson remarked that, whilst they dropped off one after another, the tall woman who had received his father's alms continued to kneel near the altar; and he was yet more surprised to see that his father himself, who, he had many reasons to know, was desirous to spend in the church no more time than the duties of devotion absolutely claimed, remained also on his knees, with his eyes resting on the form of the veiled devotee (such she seemed from her dress), as if his own motions were to be guided by hers. By no idea which occurred to him was Arthur able to form the least conjecture as to his father's motives; he only knew that he was engaged in a critical and dangerous negotiation, liable to influence or interruption from various quarters; and that political suspicion was so generally awake both in France, Italy, and Flanders, that the most important agents

were often obliged to assume the most impenetrable disguises, in order to insinuate themselves without suspicion into the countries where their services were required. Louis XI., in particular, whose singular policy seemed in some degree to give a character to the age in which he lived, was well known to have disguised his principal emissaries and envoys in the fictitious garbs of mendicant monks, minstrels, gipsies, and other privileged wanderers of the meanest description.

Arthur concluded, therefore, that it was not improbable that this female might, like themselves, be something more than her dress imported; and he resolved to observe his father's deportment towards her, and regulate his own actions accordingly. A bell at last announced that mass, upon a more splendid scale, was about to be celebrated before the high altar of the cathedral itself, and its sound withdrew from the sequestered chapel of St. George the few who had remained at the shrine of the military saint, excepting the father and son, and the female penitent who kneeled opposite to them. When the last of the worshipers had retired, the female arose and advanced towards the elder Philipson, who, folding his arms on his bosom, and stooping his head, in an attitude of obeisance which his son had never before seen him assume, appeared rather to wait what she had to say than to propose addressing her.

There was a pause. Four lamps, lighted before the shrine of the saint, cast a dim radiance on his armor and steed, represented as he was in the act of transfixing with his lance the prostrate dragon, whose outstretched wings and writhing neck were in part touched by their beams. The rest of the chapel was dimly illuminated by the autumnal sun, which could scarce find its way through the stained pane of the small lanceolated window, which was its only aperture to the open air. The light fell doubtful and gloomy, tinged with the various hues through which it passed, upon the stately, yet somewhat broken and dejected, form of the female, and on those of the melancholy and anxious father, and his son, who, with all the eager interest of youth, suspected and anticipated extraordinary consequences from so singular an interview.

At length the female approached to the same side of the shrine with Arthur and his father, as if to be more distinctly heard, without being obliged to raise the slow, solemn voice in which she had spoken.

"Do you here worship," she said, "the St. George of Bur-

gundy or the St. George of Merry England, the flower of chivalry ?"

"I serve," said Philipson, folding his hands humbly on his bosom, "the saint to whom this chapel is dedicated, and the Deity with whom I hope for his holy intercession, whether here or in my native country."

"Ay—you," said the female, "even you can forget—you, even you, who have been numbered among the mirror of knighthood—can forget that you have worshiped in the royal fane of Windsor—that you have there bent a *gartered* knee, where kings and princes kneeled around you—you can forget this, and make your orisons at a foreign shrine, with a heart undisturbed with the thoughts of what you have been —praying, like some poor peasant, for bread and life during the day that passes over you."

"Lady," replied Philipson, "in my proudest hours I was, before the Being to whom I preferred my prayers, but as a worm in the dust. In His eyes I am now neither less nor more, degraded as I may be in the opinion of my fellow-reptiles."

"How canst thou think thus ?" said the devotee ; "and yet it is well with thee that thou canst. But what have thy losses been compared to mine ?"

She put her hand to her brow, and seemed for a moment overpowered by agonizing recollections.

Arthur pressed to his father's side, and inquired, in a tone of interest which could not be repressed, "Father, who is this lady ? Is it my mother ?"

"No, my son," answered Philipson. "Peace, for the sake of all you hold dear or holy !"

The singular female, however, heard both the question and answer, though expressed in a whisper.

"Yes," she said, "young man, I am—I should say I was —your mother—the mother, the protectress, of all that was noble in England. I am Margaret of Anjou."

Arthur sank on his knees before the dauntless widow of Henry the Sixth, who so long, and in such desperate circumstances, upheld, by unyielding courage and deep policy, the sinking cause of her feeble husband ; and who, if she occasionally abused victory by cruelty and revenge, had made some atonement by the indomitable resolution with which she had supported the fiercest storms of adversity. Arthur had been bred in devoted adherence to the now dethroned line of Lancaster, of which his father was one of the most distinguished supporters ; and his earliest deeds of arms,

which, though unfortunate, were neither obscure nor ignoble, had been done in their cause. With an enthusiasm belonging to his age and education, he in the same instant flung his bonnet on the pavement and knelt at the feet of his ill fated sovereign.

Margaret threw back the veil which concealed those noble and majestic features which even yet, though rivers of tears had furrowed her cheek, though care, disappointment, domestic grief, and humbled pride had quenched the fire of her eye, and wasted the smooth dignity of her forehead—even yet showed the remains of that beauty which once was held unequaled in Europe. The apathy with which a succession of misfortunes and disappointed hopes had chilled the feelings of the unfortunate princess was for a moment melted by the sight of the fair youth's enthusiasm. She abandoned one hand to him, which he covered with tears and kisses, and with the other stroked with maternal tenderness his curled locks, as she endeavored to raise him from the posture he had assumed. His father, in the meanwhile, closed the door of the chapel and placed his back against it, withdrawing himself thus from the group, as if for the purpose of preventing any stranger from entering during a scene so extraordinary.

"And thou, then," said Margaret, in a voice where female tenderness combated strangely with her natural pride of rank, and with the calm, stoical indifference induced by the intensity of her personal misfortunes—"thou, fair youth, art the last scion of the noble stem so many fair boughs of which have fallen in our hapless cause. Alas—alas! what can I do for thee? Margaret has not even a blessing to bestow. So wayward is her fate, that her benedictions are curses, and she has but to look on you and wish you well to insure your speedy and utter ruin. I—I have been the fatal poison-tree whose influence has blighted and destroyed all the fair plants that arose beside and around me, and brought death upon every one, yet am myself unable to find it."

"Noble and royal mistress," said the elder Englishman, "let not your princely courage, which has borne such extremities, be dismayed, now that they are passed over, and that a chance at least of happier times is approaching to you and to England."

"To England, to *me*, noble Oxford!" said the forlorn and widowed Queen. "If to-morrow's sun could place me once more on the throne of England, could it give back to me what I have lost? I speak not of wealth or power; they are as nothing in the balance. I speak not of the hosts of noble

friends who have fallen in defense of me and mine—Somersets, Percys, Staffords, Cliffords; they have found their place in fame, in the annals of their country. I speak not of my husband, he has exchanged the state of a suffering saint upon earth for that of a glorified saint in Heaven. But O, Oxford, my son—my Edward! Is it possible for me to look on this youth, and not remember that thy countess and I on the same night gave birth to two fair boys? How oft we endeavored to prophesy their future fortunes, and to persuade ourselves that the same constellation which shone on their birth would influence their succeeding life, and hold a friendly and equal bias till they reached some destined goal of happiness and honor! Thy Arthur lives: but, alas! my Edward, born under the same auspices, fills a bloody grave."

She wrapped her head in her mantle, as if to stifle the complaints and groans which maternal affection poured forth at these cruel recollections. Philipson, or the exiled Earl of Oxford, as we may now term him, distinguished in those changeful times by the steadiness with which he had always maintained his loyalty to the line of Lancaster, saw the imprudence of indulging his sovereign in her weakness.

"Royal mistress," he said, "life's journey is that of a brief winter's day, and its course will run on whether we avail ourselves of its progress or no. My sovereign is, I trust, too much mistress of herself to suffer lamentation for what is passed to deprive her of the power of using the present time. I am here in obedience to your command; I am to see Burgundy forthwith, and if I find him pliant to the purpose to which we would turn him, events may follow which will change into gladness our present mourning. But we must use our opportunity with speed as well as zeal. Let me know, then, madam, for what reason your Majesty hath come hither, disguised and in danger? Surely it was not merely to weep over this young man that the high-minded Queen Margaret left her father's court, disguised herself in mean attire, and came from a place of safety to one of doubt at least, if not of danger?"

"You mock me, Oxford," said the unfortunate Queen, "or you deceive yourself, if you think you still serve that Margaret whose word was never spoken without a reason, and whose slightest action was influenced by a motive. Alas! I am no longer the same firm and rational being. The feverish character of grief, while it makes one place hateful to me, drives me to another in very impatience of spirit. My father's residence, thou sayst, is safe; but is it tolerable for

such a soul as mine? Can one who has been deprived of the noblest and richest kingdom of Europe—one who has lost hosts of noble friends—one who is a widowed consort, a childless mother—one upon whose head Heaven hath poured forth its last vial of unmitigated wrath—can she stoop to be the companion of a weak old man, who, in sonnets and in music, in mummery and folly, in harping and rhyming, finds a comfort for all that poverty has that is distressing, and, what is still worse, even a solace in all that is ridiculous and contemptible?"

"Nay, with your leave, madam," said her counselor, "blame not the good King René because, persecuted by fortune, he has been able to find out for himself humbler sources of solace, which your prouder spirit is disposed to disdain. A contention among his minstrels has for him the animation of a knightly combat; and a crown of flowers twined by his troubadours, and graced by their sonnets, he accounts a valuable compensation for the diadems of Jerusalem, of Naples, and of both Sicilies, of which he only possesses the empty titles."

"Speak not to me of the pitiable old man," said Margaret—"sunk below even the hatred of his worse enemies, and never thought worthy of anything more than contempt. I tell thee, noble Oxford, I have been driven nearly mad with my forced residence at Aix, in the paltry circle which he calls his court. My ears, tuned as they now are only to sounds of affliction, are not so weary of the eternal tinkling of harps, and squeaking of rebecks, and snapping of castanets; my eyes are not so tired of the beggarly affectation of court ceremonial, which is only respectable when it implies wealth and expresses power—as my very soul is sick of the paltry ambition which can find pleasure in spangles, tassels, and trumpery, when the reality of all that is great and noble hath passed away. No, Oxford. If I am doomed to lose the last cast which fickle fortune seems to offer me, I will retreat into the meanest convent in the Pyrenean hills, and at least escape the insult of the idiot gaiety of my father. Let him pass from our memory as from the page of history, in which his name will never be recorded. I have much of more importance both to hear and to tell. And now, my Oxford, what news from Italy? Will the Duke of Milan afford us assistance with his counsels, or with his treasures?"

"With his counsels willingly, madam; but how you will relish them I know not, since he recommends to us sub-

mission to our hapless fate, and resignation to the will of Providence."

"The wily Italian! Will not, then, Galeasso advance any part of his hoards, or assist a friend to whom he hath in his time full often sworn faith?"

"Not even the diamonds which I offered to deposit in his hands," answered the Earl, "could make him unlock his treasury to supply us with ducats for our enterprise. Yet he said, if Charles of Burgundy should think seriously of an exertion in our favor, such was his regard for that great prince, and his deep sense of your Majesty's misfortunes, that he would consider what the state of his exchequer, though much exhausted, and the condition of his subjects, though impoverished by taxes and talliages, would permit him to advance in your behalf."

"The double-faced hypocrite!" said Margaret. "If the assistance of the princely Burgundy lends us a chance of regaining what is our own, then he will give us some paltry parcel of crowns, that our restored prosperity may forget his indifference to our adversity! But what of Burgundy? I have ventured hither to tell you what I have learned, and to hear report of your proceedings—a trusty watch provides for the secrecy of our interview. My impatience to see you brought me hither in this mean disguise. I have a small retinue at a convent a mile beyond the town—I have had your arrival watched by the faithful Lambert—and now I come to know your hopes or your fears, and to tell you my own."

"Royal lady," said the Earl, "I have not seen the Duke. You know his temper to be wilful, sudden, haughty, and unpersuadable. If he can adopt the calm and sustained policy which the times require, I little doubt his obtaining full amends of Louis, his sworn enemy, and even of Edward, his ambitious brother-in-law. But if he continues to yield to extravagant fits of passion, with or without provocation, he may hurry into a quarrel with the poor but hardy Helvetians, and is likely to engage in a perilous contest, in which he cannot be expected to gain anything, while he undergoes a chance of the most serious losses."

"Surely," replied the Queen, "he will not trust the usurper Edward, even in the very moment when he is giving the greatest proof of treachery to his alliance?"

"In what respect, madam?" replied Oxford. "The news you allude to has not reached me."

"How, my lord? Am I then the first to tell you that

Edward of York has crossed the sea with such an army as scarce even the renowned Henry V., my father-in-law, ever transported from France to Italy?"

"So much I have indeed heard was expected," said Oxford; "and I anticipated the effect as fatal to our cause."

"Edward is arrived," said Margaret, "and the traitor and usurper hath sent defiance to Louis of France, and demanded of him the crown of that kingdom as his own right—that crown which was placed on the head of my unhappy husband, when he was yet a child in the cradle."

"It is then decided—the English are in France!" answered Oxford, in a tone expressive of the deepest anxiety. "And whom brings Edward with him on this expedition?"

"All—all the bitterest enemies of our house and cause. The false, the traitorous, the dishonored George, whom he calls Duke of Clarence—the blood-drinker, Richard—the licentious Hastings—Howard—Stanley—in a word, the leaders of all those traitors whom I would not name, unless by doing so my curses could sweep them from the face of the earth."

"And—I tremble to ask," said the Earl—"does Burgundy prepare to join them as a brother of the war, and make common cause with this Yorkish host against King Louis of France?"

"By my advices," replied the Queen, "and they are both private and sure, besides that they are confirmed by the bruit of common fame—no, my good Oxford—no!"

"For that may the saints be praised!" answered Oxford. "Edward of York—I will not malign even an enemy—is a bold and fearless leader; but he is neither Edward the Third nor the heroic Black Prince, nor is he that fifth Henry of Lancaster under whom I won my spurs, and to whose lineage the thoughts of his glorious memory would have made me faithful, had my plighted vows of allegiance ever permitted me entertain a thought of varying or of defection. Let Edward engage in war with Louis without the aid of Burgundy, on which he has reckoned. Louis is indeed no hero, but he is a cautious and skilful general, more to be dreaded, perhaps, in these politic days than if Charlemagne could again raise the oriflamme, surrounded by Roland and all his paladins. Louis will not hazard such fields as those of Cressy, of Poitiers, or of Agincourt. With a thousand lances from Hainault, and twenty thousand crowns from Burgundy, Edward shall risk the loss of England, while he is engaged in

a protracted struggle for the recovery of Normandy and Guienne. But what are the movements of Burgundy?"

"He has menaced Germany," said Margaret, "and his troops are now employed in overrunning Lorraine, of which he has seized the principal towns and castles."

"Where is Ferrand de Vaudemont—a youth, it is said, of courage and enterprise, and claiming Lorraine in right of his mother, Yolande of Anjou, the sister of your Grace?"

"Fled," replied the Queen, "into Germany or Helvetia."

"Let Burgundy beware of him," said the experienced Earl; "for, should the disinherited youth obtain confederates in Germany and allies among the hardy Swiss, Charles of Burgundy may find him a far more formidable enemy than he expects. We are strong for the present only in the Duke's strength, and if it is wasted in idle and desultory efforts our hopes, alas! vanish with his power, even if he should be found to have the decided will to assist us. My friends in England are resolute not to stir without men and money from Burgundy."

"It is a fear," said Margaret, "but not our worst fear. I dread more the policy of Louis, who, unless my espials have grossly deceived me, has even already proposed a secret peace to Edward, offering, with large sums of money to purchase England to the Yorkists, and a truce of seven years."

"It cannot be," said Oxford. "No Englishman, commanding such an army as Edward must now lead, dares for very shame to retire from France without a manly attempt to recover his lost provinces."

"Such would have been the thoughts of a rightful prince," said Margaret, "who left behind him an obedient and faithful kingdom. Such may not be the thoughts of this Edward, misnamed Plantagenet, base perhaps in mind as in blood, since they say his real father was one Blackburn, an archer of Middleham—usurper, at least, if not bastard—such will not be his thoughts.* Every breeze that blows from England will bring with it apprehension of defection amongst those over whom he has usurped authority. He will not sleep in peace till he returns to England with those cut-throats, whom he relies upon for the defense of his stolen crown. He will engage in no war with Louis, for Louis will not hesitate to soothe his pride by humiliation, to gorge his avarice and pamper his voluptuous prodigality by sums of gold; and I fear much we shall soon hear of the English

* The Lancastrian party threw the imputation of bastardy (which was totally unfounded) upon Edward IV.

army retiring from France with the idle boast that they have displayed their banners once more, for a week or two, in the provinces which were formerly their own."

"It the more becomes us to be speedy in moving Burgundy to decision," replied Oxford; "and for that purpose I post to Dijon. Such an army as Edward's cannot be transported over the narrow seas in several weeks. The probability is that they must winter in France, even if they should have truce with King Louis. With a thousand Hainault lances from the eastern part of Flanders, I can be soon in the North, where we have many friends, besides the assurance of help from Scotland. The faithful West will rise at a signal—a Clifford can be found, though the mountain mists have hid him from Richard's researches—the Welsh will assemble at the rallying word of Tudor—the Red Rose raises its head once more—and so, God save King Henry!"

"Alas!" said the Queen. "But no husband—no friend of mine—the son but of my mother-in-law by a Welsh chieftain—cold, they say, and crafty. But be it so—let me only see Lancaster triumph and obtain revenge upon York, and I will die contented!"

"It is then your pleasure that I should make the proffers expressed by your Grace's former mandates, to induce Burgundy to stir himself in our cause? If he learns the proposal of a truce betwixt France and England, it will sting sharper than aught I can say."

"Promise all, however," said the Queen. "I know his inmost soul: it is set upon extending the dominions of his house in every direction. For this he has seized Gueldres—for this he now overruns and occupies Lorraine—for this he covets such poor remnants of Provence as my father still calls his own. With such augmented territories, he proposes to exchange his ducal diadem for an arched crown of independent sovereignty. Tell the Duke, Margaret can assist his views; tell him that my father René shall disown the opposition made to the Duke's seizure of Lorraine—he shall do more, he shall declare Charles his heir in Provence, with my ample consent; tell him, the old man shall cede his dominions to him upon the instant that his Hainaulters embark for England, some small pension deducted to maintain a concert of fiddlers and a troop of morrice-dancers. These are René's only earthly wants. Mine are still fewer. Revenge upon York, and a speedy grave! For the paltry gold which we may need, thou hast jewels to pledge. For the other conditions, security if required."

"For these, madam, I can pledge my knigntly word, in addition to your royal faith; and if more is required, my son shall be a hostage with Burgundy."

"Oh no—no!" exclaimed the dethroned Queen, touched by perhaps the only tender feeling which repeated and extraordinary misfortunes had not chilled into insensibility. "Hazard not the life of the noble youth—he that is the last of the loyal and faithful house of Vere—he that should have been the brother in arms of my beloved Edward—he that had so nearly been his companion in a bloody and untimely grave! Do not involve this poor child in these fatal intrigues, which have been so baneful to his family. Let him go with me. Him at least I will shelter from danger whilst I live, and provide for when I am no more."

"Forgive me, madam," said Oxford, with the firmness which distinguished him. "My son, as you deign to recollect, is a De Vere, destined, perhaps, to be the last of his name. Fall he may, but it must not be without honor. To whatever dangers his duty and allegiance call him, be it from sword or lance, ax or gibbet, to these he must expose himself frankly, when his doing so can mark his allegiance. His ancestors have shown him how to brave them all."

"True—true," exclaimed the unfortunate Queen, raising her arms wildly. "All must perish—all that have honored Lancaster—all that have loved Margaret, or whom she has loved! The destruction must be universal—the young must fall with the old—not a lamb of the scattered flock shall escape!"

"For God's sake, gracious madam," said Oxford, "compose yourself! I hear them knock on the chapel door."

"It is the signal of parting," said the exiled Queen, collecting herself. "Do not fear, noble Oxford, I am not often thus; but how seldom do I see those friends whose faces and voices can disturb the composure of my despair! Let me tie this relic about thy neck, good youth, and fear not its evil influence, though you receive it from an ill-omened hand. It was my husband's, blessed by many a prayer, and sanctified by many a holy tear; even my unhappy hands cannot pollute it. I should have bound it on my Edward's bosom on the dreadful morning of Tewkesbury fight; but he armed early—went to the field without seeing me, and all my purpose was vain."

She passed a golden chain round Arthur's neck as she spoke, which contained a small gold crucifix of rich but barbarous manufacture. It had belonged, said tradition, to

Edward the Confessor. The knock at the door of the chapel was repeated.

"We must not tarry," said Margaret; "let us part here—you for Dijon, I to Aix, my abode of unrest in Provence. Farewell; we may meet in a better hour—yet how can I hope it? Thus I said on the morning before the fight of St. Albans—thus on the dark dawning of Towton—thus on the yet more bloody field of Tewkesbury—and what was the event? Yet hope is a plant which cannot be rooted out of a noble breast till the last heart-string crack as it is pulled away."

So saying, she passed through the chapel door, and mingled in the miscellaneous assemblage of personages who worshiped, or indulged their curiosity, or consumed their idle hours, amongst the aisles of the cathedral.

Philipson and his son, both deeply impressed with the singular interview which had just taken place, returned to their inn, where they found a pursuivant, with the Duke of Burgundy's badge and livery, who informed them that, if they were the English merchants who were carrying wares of value to the court of the Duke, he had orders to afford them the countenance of his escort and inviolable character. Under his protection they set out from Strasburg; but such was the uncertainty of the Duke of Burgundy's motions, and such the numerous obstacles which occurred to interrupt their journey, in a country disturbed by the constant passage of troops and preparation for war, that it was evening on the second day ere they reached the plain near Dijon on which the whole, or great part, of his power lay encamped.

CHAPTER XXV

Thus said the Duke—thus did the Duke infer.
Richard III.

THE eyes of the elder traveler were well accustomed to sights of martial splendor, yet even he was dazzled with the rich and glorious display of the Burgundian camp, in which, near the walls of Dijon, Charles, the wealthiest prince in Europe, had displayed his own extravagance, and encouraged his followers to similar profusion. The pavilions of the meanest officers were of silk and samite, while those of the nobility and great leaders glittered with cloth of silver, cloth of gold, variegated tapestry, and other precious materials, which in no other situation would have been employed as a cover from the weather, but would themselves have been thought worthy of the most careful protection. The horsemen and infantry who mounted guard were arrayed in the richest and most gorgeous armor. A beautiful and very numerous train of artillery was drawn up near the entrance of the camp, and in its commander Philipson (to give the Earl the traveling name to which our readers are accustomed) recognized Henry Colvin, an Englishman of inferior birth, but distinguished for his skill in conducting these terrible engines which had of late come into general use in war. The banners and pennons which were displayed by every knight, baron, and man of rank floated before their tents, and the owners of these transitory dwellings sat at the door half-armed, and enjoyed the military contests of the soldiers, in wrestling, pitching the bar, and other athletic exercises.

Long rows of the noblest horses were seen at picquet, prancing and tossing their heads, as impatient of the inactivity to which they were confined, or were heard neighing over the provender which was spread plentifully before them. The soldiers formed joyous groups around the minstrels and strolling jugglers, or were engaged in drinking-parties at the sutlers' tents; others strolled about with folded arms, casting their eyes now and then to the sinking sun, as if desir-

ous that the hour should arrive which should put an end to a day unoccupied, and therefore tedious.

At length the travelers reached, amidst the dazzling varieties of this military display, the pavilion of the Duke himself, before which floated heavily in the evening breeze the broad and rich banner in which glowed the armorial bearings and quarterings of a prince, duke of six provinces, and count of fifteen counties, who was, from his power, his disposition, and the success which seemed to attend his enterprises, the general dread of Europe. The pursuivant made himself known to some of the household, and the Englishmen were immediately received with courtesy, though not such as to draw attention upon them, and conveyed to a neighboring tent, the residence of a general officer, which they were given to understand was destined for their accommodation, and where their packages accordingly were deposited, and refreshments offered them.

"As the camp is filled," said the domestic who waited upon them, "with soldiers of different nations and uncertain dispositions, the Duke of Burgundy, for the safety of your merchandise, has ordered you the protection of a regular sentinel. In the meantime, be in readiness to wait on his Highness, seeing you may look to be presently sent for."

Accordingly, the elder Philipson was shortly after summoned to the Duke's presence, introduced by a back entrance into the ducal pavilion, and into that part of it which, screened by close curtains and wooden barricades, formed Charles's own separate apartment. The plainness of the furniture, and the coarse apparatus of the Duke's toilet, formed a strong contrast to the appearance of the exterior of the pavilion; for Charles, whose character was, in that as in other things, far from consistent, exhibited in his own person during war an austerity, or rather coarseness, of dress, and sometimes of manners also, which was more like the rudeness of a German lanzknecht than the bearing of a prince of exalted rank; while, at the same time, he encouraged and enjoined a great splendor of expense and display amongst his vassals and courtiers, as if to be rudely attired, and to despise every restraint, even of ordinary ceremony, were a privilege of the sovereign alone. Yet, when it pleased him to assume state in person and manners, none knew better than Charles of Burgundy how he ought to adorn and demean himself.

Upon his toilet appeared brushes and combs which might have claimed dismissal as past the term of service,

overworn hats and doublets, dog-leashes, leather belts, and other such paltry articles; amongst which lay at random, as it seemed, the great diamond called Sanci, the three rubies termed the Three Brothers of Antwerp, another great diamond called the Lamp of Flanders, and other precious stones of scarcely inferior value and rarity. This extraordinary display somewhat resembled the character of the Duke himself, who mixed cruelty with justice, magnanimity with meanness of spirit, economy with extravagance, and liberality with avarice; being, in fact, consistent in nothing excepting in his obstinate determination to follow the opinion he had once formed, in every situation of things, and through all variety of risks.

In the midst of the valueless and inestimable articles of his wardrobe and toilet, the Duke of Burgundy called out to the English traveler, "Welcome, Herr Philipson—welcome, you of a nation whose traders are princes, and their merchants the mighty ones of the earth. What new commodities have you brought to gull us with? You merchants, by St. George, are a wily generation."

"Faith, no new merchandise I, my lord," answered the elder Englishman: "I bring but the commodities which I showed your Highness the last time I communicated with you, in the hope of a poor trader that your Grace may find them more acceptable upon a review than when you first saw them."

"It is well, Sir—Philipville, I think they call you? You are a simple trader, or you take me for a silly purchaser, that you think to gull me with the same wares which I fancied not formerly. Change of fashion, man—novelty—is the motto of commerce; your Lancaster wares have had their day, and I have bought of them like others, and was like enough to have paid dear for them too. York is all the vogue now."

"It may be so among the vulgar," said the Earl of Oxford; "but for souls like your Highness faith, honor, and loyalty are jewels which change of fancy or mutability of taste cannot put out of fashion."

"Why, it may be, noble Oxford," said the Duke, "that I preserve in my secret mind some veneration for these old-fashioned qualities, else why should I have such regard for your person, in which they have ever been distinguished? But my situation is painfully urgent, and should I make a false step at this crisis, I might break the purposes of my whole life. Observe me, sir merchant. Here has come over

your old competitor, Blackburn, whom some call Edward of York and of London, with a commodity of bows and bills such as never entered France since King Arthur's time; and he offers to enter into joint adventure with me, or, in plain speech, to make common cause with Burgundy, till we smoke out of his earths the old fox Louis, and nail his hide to the stable-door. In a word, England invites me to take part with him against my most wily and inveterate enemy, the King of France; to rid myself of the chain of vassalage, and to ascend into the rank of independent princes; how think you, noble earl, can I forego this seducing temptation?"

"You must ask this of some of your counselors of Burgundy," said Oxford; "it is a question fraught too deeply with ruin to my cause for me to give a fair opinion on it."

"Nevertheless," said Charles, "I ask thee as an honorable man, what objections you see to the course proposed to me? Speak your mind, and speak it freely."

"My lord, I know it is in your Highness's nature to entertain no doubts of the facility of executing anything which you have once determined shall be done. Yet, though this princelike disposition may in some cases prepare for its own success, and has often done so, there are others in which, persisting in our purpose, merely because we have once willed it, leads not to success but to ruin. Look, therefore, at this English army. Winter is approaching, where are they to be lodged? how are they to be victualed? by whom are they to be paid? Is your Highness to take all the expense and labor of fitting them for the summer campaign? for, rely on it, an English army never was, nor will be, fit for service till they have been out of their own island long enough to accustom them to military duty. They are men, I grant, the fittest for soldiers in the world, but they are not soldiers as yet, and must be trained to become such at your Highness's expense."

"Be it so," said Charles; "I think the Low Countries can find food for the beef-consuming knaves for a few weeks, and villages for them to lie in, and officers to train their sturdy limbs to war, and provost-marshals enough to reduce their refractory spirit to discipline."

"What happens next?" said Oxford. "You march to Paris, add to Edward's usurped power another kingdom, restore to him all the possessions which England ever had in France, Normandy, Maine, Anjou, Gascony, and all besides

—can you trust this Edward when you shall have thus fostered his strength, and made him far stronger than this Louis whom you have united to pull down?"

"By St. George, I will not dissemble with you! It is in that very point that my doubts trouble me. Edward is indeed my brother-in-law, but I am a man little inclined to put my head under my wife's girdle."

"And the times," said Philipson, "have too often shown the inefficiency of family alliances to prevent the most gross breaches of faith."

"You say well, earl. Clarence betrayed his father-in-law; Louis poisoned his brother. Domestic affections, pshaw! they sit warm enough by a private man's fireside, but they cannot come into fields of battle, or princes' halls, where the wind blows cold. No, my alliance with Edward by marriage were little succor to me in time of need. I would as soon ride an unbroken horse, with no better bridle than a lady's garter. But what then is the result? He wars on Louis; whichever gains the better, I, who must be strengthened in their mutual weakness, receive the advantage. The Englishmen slay the French with their cloth-yard shafts, and the Frenchmen, by skirmishes, waste, weaken, and destroy the English. With spring I take the field with an army superior to both, and then, St. George for Burgundy!"

"And if in the meanwhile, your Highness will deign to assist, even in the most trifling degree, a cause the most honorable that ever knight laid lance in rest for, a moderate sum of money, and a small body of Hainault lances, who may gain both fame and fortune by the service, may replace the injured heir of Lancaster in the possession of his native and rightful dominion."

"Ay, marry, sir earl," said the Duke, "you come roundly to the point; but we have seen, and indeed partly assisted at, so many turns betwixt York and Lancaster, that we have some doubt which is the side to which Heaven has given the right, and the inclinations of the people the effectual power; we are surprised into absolute giddiness by so many extraordinary revolutions of fortune as England has exhibited."

"A proof, my lord, that these mutations are not yet ended, and that your generous aid may give to the better side an effectual turn of advantage."

"And lend my cousin, Margaret of Anjou, my arm to dethrone my wife's brother? Perhaps he deserves small goodwill at my hands, since he and his insolent nobles have been urging me with remonstrances, and even threats, to lay aside all

my own important affairs, and join Edward, forsooth, in his knight-errant expedition against Louis. I will march against Louis at my own time, and not sooner; and, by St. George! neither island king nor island noble shall dictate to Charles of Burgundy. You are fine conceited companions, you English of both sides, that think the matters of your own bedlam island are as interesting to all the world as to yourselves. But neither York nor Lancaster, neither brother Blackburn nor cousin Margaret of Anjou, not with John de Vere to back her, shall gull me. Men lure no hawks with empty hands."

Oxford, familiar with the Duke's disposition, suffered him to exhaust himself in chafing, that any one should pretend to dictate his course of conduct, and, when he was at length silent, replied with calmness—"Do I live to hear the noble Duke of Burgundy, the mirror of European chivalry, say that no reason has been shown to him for an adventure where a helpless queen is to be redressed—a royal house raised from the dust? Is there not immortal *los* and honor—the trumpet of fame to proclaim the sovereign who, alone in a degenerate age, has united the duties of a generous knight with those of a princely sovereign——"

The Duke interrupted him, striking him at the same time on the shoulder—"And King René's five hundred fiddlers to tune their cracked violins in my praise, and King René himself to listen to them, and say, 'Well fought, Duke—well played, fiddler?' I tell thee, John of Oxford, when thou and I wore maiden armor, such words as fame, honor, *los*, knightly glory, lady's love, and so forth, were good mottoes for our snow-white shields, and a fair enough argument for splintering lances—ay, and in tilt-yard, though somewhat old for these fierce follies, I would jeopard my person in such a quarrel yet, as becomes a knight of the order; but when we come to paying down of crowns, and embarking of large squadrons, we must have to propose to our subjects some substantial excuse for plunging them in war—some proposal for the public good—or, by St. George! for our own private advantage, which is the same thing. This is the course the world runs, and, Oxford, to tell the plain truth, I mean to hold the same bias."

"Heaven forbid that I should expect your Highness to act otherwise than with a view to your subjects' welfare—the increase, that is, as your Grace happily expresses it, of your own power and dominion. The money we require is not in benevolence, but in loan; and Margaret is willing to

deposit these jewels, of which I think your Grace knows the value, till she shall repay the sum which your friendship may advance in her necessity."

"Ha, ha!" said the Duke, "would our cousin make a pawnbroker of us, and have us deal with her like a Jewish usurer with his debtor? Yet, in faith, Oxford, we may need the diamonds, for if this business were otherwise feasible, it is possible that I myself must become a borrower to aid my cousin's necessities. I have applied to the states of the duchy, who are now sitting, and expect, as is reasonable, a large supply. But there are restless heads and close hands among them, and they may be niggardly. So place the jewels on the table in the meanwhile. Well, say I am to be no sufferer in purse by this feat of knight-errantry which you propose to me, still princes enter not into war without some view of advantage?"

"Listen to me, noble sovereign. You are naturally bent to unite the great estates of your father and those you have acquired by your own arms into a compact and firm dukedom——"

"Call it kingdom," said Charles; "it is the worthier word."

"Into a kingdom, of which the crown shall sit as fair and even on your Grace's brow as that of France on your present suzerain, Louis."

"It needs not such shrewdness as yours to descry that such is my purpose," said the Duke; "else, wherefore am I here with helm on my head and sword by my side? And wherefore are my troops seizing on the strong places in Lorraine, and chasing before them the beggarly De Vaudemont, who has the insolence to claim it as his inheritance? Yes, my friend, the aggrandizements of Burgundy is a theme for which the duke of that fair province is bound to fight, while he can put foot in stirrup."

"But think you not," said the English earl, "since you allow me to speak freely with your Grace on the footing of old acquaintanceship—think you not that in this chart of your dominions, otherwise so fairly bounded, there is something on the southern frontier which might be arranged more advantageously for a King of Burgundy?"

"I cannot guess whither you would lead me," said the Duke, looking at a map of the duchy and his other possessions, to which the Englishman had pointed his attention, and then turning his broad keen eye upon the face of the banished earl.

"I would say," replied the latter, "that, to so powerful a prince as your Grace, there is no safe neighbor but the sea. Here is Provence, which interferes betwixt you and the Mediterranean—Provence, with its princely harbors and fertile cornfields and vineyards. Were it not well to include it in your map of sovereignty, and thus touch the middle sea with one hand, while the other rested on the sea-coast of Flanders?"

"Provence, said you?" replied the Duke, eagerly; "why, man, my very dreams are of Provence. I cannot smell an orange but it reminds me of its perfumed woods and bowers, its olives, citrons, and pomegranates. But how to frame pretensions to it? Shame it were to disturb René, the harmless old man, nor would it become a near relation. Then he is the uncle of Louis; and most probably, failing his daughter Margaret, or perhaps in preference to her, he hath named the French king his heir."

"A better claim might be raised up in your Grace's own person," said the Earl of Oxford, "if you will afford Margaret of Anjou the succor she requires by me."

"Take the aid thou requirest," replied the Duke—"take double the amount of it in men and money! Let me but have a claim upon Provence, though thin as a single thread of thy Queen Margaret's hair, and let me alone for twisting it into the tough texture of a quadruple cable. But I am a fool to listen to the dreams of one who, ruined himself, can lose little by holding forth to others the most extravagant hopes."

Charles breathed high, and changed complexion as he spoke.

"I am not such a person, my Lord Duke," said the Earl. "Listen to me—René is broken with years, fond of repose, and too poor to maintain his rank with the necessary dignity; too good-natured, or too feeble-minded, to lay farther imposts on his subjects; weary of contending with bad fortune, and desirous to resign his territories——"

"His territories!" said Charles.

"Yes, all he actually possesses, and the much more extensive dominions which he has claim to, but which have passed from his sway."

"You take away my breath!" said the Duke. "René resign Provence! And what says Margaret—the proud, the high-minded Margaret—will she subscribe to so humiliating a proceeding?"

"For the chance of seeing Lancaster triumph in England,

she would resign, not only dominion, but life itself. And in truth the sacrifice is less than it may seem to be. It is certain that, when René dies, the King of France will claim the old man's county of Provence as a male fief, and there is no one strong enough to back Margaret's claim of inheritance, however just it may be."

"It is just, said Charles—"it is undeniable! I will not hear of its being denied or challenged—that is, when once it is established in our own person. It is the true principle of the war for the public good, that none of the great fiefs be suffered to revert again to the crown of France, least of all while it stands on a brow so astucious and unprincipled as that of Louis. Burgundy joined to Provence—a dominion from the German Ocean to the Mediterranean! Oxford, thou art my better angel!"

"Your Grace must, however, reflect," said Oxford, "that honorable provision must be made for King René."

"Certainly, man—certainly: he shall have a score of fiddlers and jugglers to play, roar, and recite to him from morning till night. He shall have a court of troubadours, who shall do nothing but drink, flute, and fiddle to him, and pronounce *arrests of love*, to be confirmed or reversed by an appeal to himself, the supreme *roi d'amour*. And Margaret shall also be honorably sustained, in the manner you may point out."

"That will be easily settled," answered the English earl. "If our attempts on England succeed, she will need no aid from Burgundy. If she fails, she retires into a cloister, and it will not be long that she will need the honorable maintenance which, I am sure, your Grace's generosity will willingly assign her."

"Unquestionably," answered Charles, "and on a scale which will become us both; but, by my halidome, John of Vere, the abbess into whose cloister Margaret of Anjou shall retire will have an ungovernable penitent under her charge. Well do I know her; and, sir earl, I will not clog our discourse by expressing any doubts that, if she pleases, she can compel her father to resign his estates to whomsoever she will. She is like my brache, Gorgon, who compels whatsoever hound is coupled with her to go the way she chooses, or she strangles him if he resists. So has Margaret acted with her simple-minded husband, and I am aware that her father, a fool of a different cast, must of necessity be equally tractable. I think *I* could have matched her, though my very neck aches at the thought of the struggles we should have

had for mastery. But you look grave, because I jest with the pertinacious temper of my unhappy cousin."

"My lord," said Oxford, "whatever are or have been the defects of my mistress, she is in distress, and almost in desolation. She is my sovereign, and your Highness's cousin not the less."

"Enough said, sir earl," answered the Duke. "Let us speak seriously. Whatever we may think of the abdication of King René, I fear we shall find it difficult to make Louis XI, see the matter as favorably as we do. He will hold that the county of Provence is a male fief, and that neither the resignation of René nor the consent of his daughter can prevent its reverting to the crown of France, as the King of Sicily, as they call him, hath no male issue."

"That, may it please your Grace, is a question for battle to decide; and your Highness has successfully braved Louis for a less important stake. All I can say is, that, if your Grace's active assistance enables the young Earl of Richmond to succeed in his enterprise, you shall have the aid of three thousand English archers, if old John of Oxford, for want of a better leader, were to bring them over himself."

"A noble aid," said the Duke, "graced still more by him who promises to lead them. Thy succor, noble Oxford, were precious to me, did you but come with your sword by your side and a single page at your back. I know you well, both heart and head. But let us to this gear; exiles, even the wisest, are privileged in promises, and sometimes—excuse me, noble Oxford—impose on themselves as well as on their friends. What are the hopes on which you desire me again to embark on so troubled and uncertain an ocean as these civil contests of yours?"

The Earl of Oxford produced a schedule, and explained to the Duke the plan of his expedition, to be backed by an insurrection of the friends of Lancaster, of which it is enough to say, that it was bold to the verge of temerity; but yet so well compacted and put together as to bear, in those times of rapid revolution, and under a leader of Oxford's approved military skill and political sagacity, a strong appearance of probable success.

While Duke Charles mused over the particulars of an enterprise attractive and congenial to his own disposition, while he counted over the affronts which he had received from his brother-in-law, Edward IV., the present opportunity for taking a signal revenge, and the rich acquisition which he hoped to make in Provence by the cession in his favor of

René of Anjou and his daughter, the Englishman failed not to press on his consideration the urgent necessity of suffering no time to escape.

"The accomplishment of this scheme," he said, "demands the utmost promptitude. To have a chance of success, I must be in England, with your Grace's auxiliary forces, before Edward of York can return from France with his army."

"And having come hither," said the Duke, "our worthy brother will be in no hurry to return again. He will meet with black-eyed French women and ruby-colored French wine, and brother Blackburn is no man to leave such commodities in a hurry."

"My Lord Duke, I will speak truth of my enemy. Edward is indolent and luxurious when things are easy around him, but let him feel the spur of necessity, and he becomes as eager as a pampered steed. Louis, too, who seldom fails in finding means to accomplish his ends, is bent upon determining the English king to recross the sea; therefore, speed, noble prince—speed is the soul of your enterprise."

"Speed!" said the Duke of Burgundy. "Why, I will go with you and see the embarkation myself; and tried, approved soldiers you shall have, such as are nowhere to be found save in Artois and Hainault."

"But pardon yet, noble Duke, the impatience of a drowning wretch urgently pressing for assistance. When shall we to the coast of Flanders to order this important measure?"

"Why, in a fortnight, or perchance a week, or, in a word, so soon as I shall have chastised to purpose a certain gang of thieves and robbers who, as the scum of the caldron will always be uppermost, have got up into the fastnesses of the Alps, and from thence annoy our frontiers by contraband traffic, pillage, and robbery."

"Your Highness means the Swiss confederates?"

"Ay, the peasant churls give themselves such a name. They are a sort of manumitted slaves of Austria, and, like a ban-dog whose chain is broken, they avail themselves of their liberty to annoy and rend whatever comes in their way."

"I traveled through their country from Italy," said the exiled earl, "and I heard it was the purpose of the cantons to send envoys to solicit peace of your Highness."

"Peace!" exclaimed Charles. "A proper sort of peaceful proceedings those of their embassy have been! Availing themselves of a mutiny of the burghers of La Ferette, the first garrison town which they entered, they stormed the walls,

seized on Archibald de Hagenbach, who commanded the place on my part, and put him to death in the market-place. Such an insult must be punished, Sir John de Vere; and if you do not see me in the storm of passion which it well deserves, it is because I have already given orders to hang up the base runagates who call themselves ambassadors."

"For God's sake, noble Duke," said the Englishman, throwing himself at Charles's feet, "for your own character, for the sake of the peace of Christendom, revoke such an order if it is really given!"

"What means this passion?" said Duke Charles. "What are these men's lives to thee, excepting that the consequences of a war may delay your expedition for a few days?"

"May render it altogether abortive," said the Earl; "nay, *must* needs do so. Hear me, Lord Duke. I was with these men on a part of their journey."

"You!" said the Duke—"you a companion of the paltry Swiss peasants? Misfortune has sunk the pride of English nobility to a low ebb, when you selected such associates."

"I was thrown amongst them by accident," said the Earl. "Some of them are of noble blood, and are, besides, men for whose peaceable intentions I ventured to constitute myself their warrant."

"On my honor, my Lord of Oxford, you graced them highly, and me no less, in interfering between the Swiss and myself! Allow me to say that I condescend when, in deference to past friendship, I permit you to speak to me of your own English affairs. Methinks you might well spare me your opinion upon topics with which you have no natural concern."

"My Lord of Burgundy," replied Oxford, "I followed your banner to Paris, and had the good luck to rescue you in the fight at Mont L'Héry, when you were beset by the French men-at-arms——"

"We have not forgot it," said Duke Charles; "and it is a sign that we keep the action in remembrance, that you have been suffered to stand before us so long, pleading the cause of a set of rascals whom we are required to spare from the gallows that groans for them because, forsooth, they have been the fellow-travelers of the Earl of Oxford!"

"Not so, my lord. I ask their lives only because they are upon a peaceful errand, and the leaders amongst them at

least have no accession to the crime of which you complain."

The Duke traversed the apartment with unequal steps in much agitation, his large eyebrows drawn down over his eyes, his hands clenched, and his teeth set, until at length he seemed to take a resolution. He rung a handbell of silver, which stood upon his table.

"Here, Contay," he said to the gentleman of his chamber who entered, "are these mountain fellows yet executed?"

"No, may it please your Highness; but the executioner waits them so soon as the priest hath confessed them."

"Let them live," said the Duke. "We will hear to-morrow in what manner they propose to justify their proceedings towards us."

Contay bowed and left the apartment; then turning to the Englishman, the Duke said, with an indescribable mixture of haughtiness with familiarity, and even kindness, but having his brows cleared and his looks composed—"We are now clear of obligation, my Lord of Oxford: you have obtained life for life—nay, to make up some inequality which there may be betwixt the value of the commodities bestowed, you have obtained six lives for one. I will, therefore, pay no more attention to you should you again upbraid me with the stumbling horse at Mont L'Héry, or your own achievements on that occasion. Most princes are contented with privately hating such men as have rendered them extraordinary services. I feel no such disposition—I only detest being reminded of having had occasion for them. Pshaw! I am half-choked with the effort of foregoing my own fixed resolution. So ho! who waits there? Bring me a drink."

An usher entered, bearing a large silver flagon, which, instead of wine, was filled with tisanne, slightly flavored by aromatic herbs.

"I am so hot and choleric by nature," said the Duke, "that our leeches prohibit me from drinking wine. But you, Oxford, are bound by no such regimen. Get thee to thy countryman, Colvin, the general of our artillery. We commend thee to his custody and hospitality till to-morrow, which must be a busy day, since I expect to receive the answer of these wiseacres of the Dijon assembly of estates; and have also to hear—thanks to your lordship's interference—these miserable Swiss envoys, as they call themselves. Well, no more on't. Good-night. You may communicate freely with Colvin, who is, like yourself, an old Lancastrian. But harkye, not a word respecting Provence—not even in

your sleep. Contay, conduct this English gentleman to Colvin's tent. He knows my pleasure respecting him."

"So please your Grace," answered Contay, "I left the English gentleman's son with Monsieur de Colvin."

"What! thine own son, Oxford? And with thee here? Why did you not tell me of him? Is he a true scion of the ancient tree?"

"It is my pride to believe so, my lord. He has been the faithful companion of all my dangers and wanderings."

"Happy man!" said the Duke, with a sigh. "You, Oxford, have a son to share your poverty and distress; I have none to be partner and successor to my greatness."

"You have a daughter, my lord," said the noble de Vere, "and it is to be hoped she will one day wed some powerful prince, who may be the stay of your Highness's house."

"Never! By St. George—never!" answered the Duke, sharply and shortly. "I will have no son-in-law, who may make the daughter's bed a stepping-stone to reach the father's crown. Oxford, I have spoken more freely than I am wont, perhaps more freely than I ought; but I hold some men trustworthy, and believe you, Sir John de Vere, to be one of them."

The English nobleman bowed, and was about to leave his presence, but the Duke presently recalled him.

"There is one thing more, Oxford. The cession of Provence is not quite enough. René and Margaret must disavow this hot-brained Ferrand de Vaudemont, who is making some foolish stir in Lorraine, in right of his mother Yolande."

"My lord," said Oxford, "Ferrand is the grandson of René the nephew of Queen Margaret; but yet——"

"But yet, by St. George, his rights, as he calls them, on Lorraine must positively be disowned. You talk of their family feelings, while you are urging me to make war on my own brother-in-law!"

"René's best apology for deserting his grandson," answered Oxford, "will be his total inability to support and assist him. I will communicate your Grace's condition, though it is hard one."

So saying, he left the pavilion.

CHAPTER XXVI

> I humbly thank your Highness,
> And am right glad to catch this good occasion
> Most thoroughly to be winnow'd, where my chaff
> And corn shall fly asunder.
>
> *King Henry VIII.*

COLVIN, the English officer, to whom the Duke of Burgundy, with splendid pay and appointments, committed the charge of his artillery, was owner of the tent assigned for the Englishman's lodging, and received the Earl of Oxford with the respect due to his rank, and to the Duke's especial orders upon that subject. He had been himself a follower of the Lancaster faction, and of course, was well disposed towards one of the very few men of distinction whom he had known personally, and who had constantly adhered to that family through the train of misfortunes by which they seemed to be totally overwhelmed. A repast, of which his son had already partaken, was offered to the Earl by Colvin, who omitted not to recommend, by precept and example, the good wine of Burgundy, from which the sovereign of the province was himself obliged to refrain.

"His Grace shows command of passion in that," said Colvin. "For, sooth to speak, and only conversing betwixt friends, his temper grows too headlong to bear the spur which a cup of cordial beverage gives to the blood, and he, therefore, wisely restricts himself to such liquid as may cool rather than inflame his natural fire of disposition."

"I can perceive as much," said the Lancastrian noble. "When I first knew the noble Duke, who was then Earl of Charolais, his temper, though always sufficiently fiery, was calmness to the impetuosity which he now displays on the smallest contradiction. Such is the course of an uninterrupted flow of prosperity. He has ascended, by his own courage and the advantage of circumstances, from the doubtful place of a feudatory and tributary prince to rank with the most powerful sovereigns in Europe, and to assume independent majesty. But I trust the noble starts of generosity which atoned for his wilful and wayward temper are not more few than formerly?"

"I have good right to say that they are not," replied the soldier of fortune, who understood generosity in the restricted sense of liberality. "The Duke is a noble and open-handed master."

"I trust his bounty is conferred on men who are as faithful and steady in their service as you, Colvin, have ever been. But I see a change in your army. I know the banners of most of the old houses in Burgundy—how is it that I observe so few of them in the Duke's camp? I see flags, and pennons, and pennoncelles; but even to me, who have been so many years acquainted, with the nobility both of France and Flanders, their bearings are unknown."

"My noble Lord of Oxford," answered the officer, "it ill becomes a man who lives on the Duke's pay to censure his conduct; but his Highness hath of late trusted too much, as it seems to me, to the hired arms of foreign levies, and too little to his own native subjects and retainers. He holds it better to take into his pay large bands of German and Italian mercenary soldiers than to repose confidence in the knights and squires who are bound to him by allegiance and feudal faith. He uses the aid of his own subjects but as the means of producing him sums of money, which he bestows on his hired troops. The Germans are honest knaves enough while regularly paid; but Heaven preserve me from the Duke's Italian bands, and that Campo-basso, their leader, who waits but the highest price to sell his Highness like a sheep for the shambles!"

"Think you so ill of him?" demanded the Earl.

"So very ill indeed, that, I believe," replied Colvin, "there is no sort of treachery which the heart can devise or the arm perpetrate that hath not ready reception in his breast and prompt execution at his hand. It is painful, my lord, for an honest Englishman like me to serve in an army where such traitors have command. But what can I do, unless I could once more find me a soldier's occupation in my native country? I often hope it will please merciful Heaven again to awaken those brave civil wars in my own dear England, where all was fair fighting, and treason was unheard of."

Lord Oxford gave his host to understand that there was a possibility that his pious wish of living and dying in his own country, and in the practise of his profession, was not to be despaired of. Meantime he requested of him, that early on the next morning he would procure him a pass and an escort for his son, whom he was compelled to despatch forthwith to Nancy [Aix], the residence of King René.

"What!" said Colvin, "is my young Lord of Oxford to take a degree in the Court of Love, for no other business is listened to at King René's capital save love and poetry?"

"I am not ambitious of such distinction for him, my good host," answered Oxford; "but Queen Margaret is with her father, and it is but fitting that the youth should kiss her hand."

"Enough spoken," said the veteran Lancastrian. "I trust, though winter is fast approaching, the Red Rose may bloom in spring."

He then ushered the Earl of Oxford to the partition of the tent which he was to occupy, in which there was a couch for Arthur also, their host, as Colvin might be termed, assuring them that, with peep of day, horses and faithful attendants should be ready to speed the youth on his journey to Nancy [Aix].

"And now, Arthur," said his father, "we must part once more. I dare give thee, in this land of danger, no written communication to my mistress, Queen Margaret; but say to her, that I have found the Duke of Burgundy wedded to his own views of interest, but not averse to combine them with hers. Say, that I have little doubt that he will grant us the required aid, but not without the expected resignation in his favor by herself and King René. Say, I would never have recommended such a sacrifice for the precarious chance of overthrowing the house of York, but that I am satisfied that France and Burgundy are hanging like vultures over Provence, and that the one or other, or both princes, are ready, on her father's demise, to pounce on such possessions as they have reluctantly spared to him during his life. An accommodation with Burgundy may, therefore, on the one hand, insure his active co-operation in the attempt on England; and, on the other, if our high-spirited princess complies not with the Duke's request, the justice of her cause will give no additional security to her hereditary claims on her father's dominions. Bid Queen Margaret, therefore, unless she should have changed her views, obtained King René's formal deed of cession, conveying his estates to the Duke of Burgundy, with her Majesty's consent. The necessary provisions to King and to herself may be filled up at her Grace's pleasure, or they may be left blank. I can trust to the Duke's generosity to their being suitably arranged. All that I fear is, that Charles may embroil himself——"

"In some silly exploit, necessary for his own honor and the safety of the dominions," answered a voice behind the

lining of the tent, "and, by doing so, attend to his own affairs more than to ours—ha, sir earl?"

At the same time the curtain was drawn aside, and a person entered, in whom, though clothed with the jerkin and bonnet of a private soldier of the Walloon guard, Oxford instantly recognized the Duke of Burgundy's harsh features, and fierce eyes, as they sparkled from under the fur and feathers with which the cap was ornamented.

Arthur, who knew not the Prince's person, started at the intrusion, and laid his hand on his dagger; but his father made a signal which staid his hand, and he gazed with wonder on the solemn respect with which the Earl received the intrusive soldier. The first word informed him of the cause.

"If this masking be done in proof of my faith, noble Duke, permit me to say it is superfluous."

"Nay, Oxford," answered the Duke, "I was a courteous spy; for I ceased to play the eavesdropper at the very moment when I had reason to expect you were about to say something to anger me."

"As I am a true knight, my Lord Duke, if you had remained behind the arras, you would only have heard the same truths which I am ready to tell in your Grace's presence, though it may have chanced they might have been more bluntly expressed."

"Well, speak them, then, in whatever phrase thou wilt: they lie in their throats that say Charles of Burgundy was ever offended by advice from a well-meaning friend."

"I would then have said," replied the English earl, "that all which Margaret of Anjou had to apprehend was that the Duke of Burgundy, when buckling on his armor to win Provence for himself, and to afford to her his powerful assistance to assert her rights in England, was likely to be withdrawn from such high objects by an imprudently eager desire to avenge himself of imaginary affronts offered to him, as he supposed, by certain confederacies of Alpine mountaineers, over whom it is impossible to gain any important advantage or acquire reputation, while, on the contrary, there is a risk of losing both. These men dwell amongst rocks and deserts which are almost inaccessible, and subsist in a manner so rude, that the poorest of your subjects would starve if subjected to such diet. They are formed by nature to be the garrison of the mountain fortresses in which she has placed them; for Heaven's sake meddle not with them, but follow forth your own nobler and more important

objects, without stirring a nest of hornets, which, once in motion, may sting you into madness."

The Duke had promised patience, and endeavored to keep his word; but the swollen muscles of his face, and his flashing eyes, showed how painful to him it was to suppress his resentment.

"You are misinformed, my lord," he said: "these men are not the inoffensive herdsmen and peasants you are pleased to suppose them. If they were, I might afford to despise them. But, flushed with some victories over the sluggish Austrians, they have shaken off all reverence for authority, assume airs of independence, form leagues, make inroads, storm towns, doom and execute men of noble birth at their pleasure. Thou art dull, and look'st as if thou dost not apprehend me. To rouse thy English blood, and make thee sympathize with my feelings to these mountaineers, know that these Swiss are very Scots to my dominions in their neighborhood—poor, proud, ferocious; easily offended, because they gain by war; ill to be appeased, because they nourish deep revenge; ever ready to seize the moment of advantage, and attack a neighbor when he is engaged in other affairs. The same unquiet, perfidious, and inveterate enemies that the Scots are to England are the Swiss to Burgundy and to my allies. What say-you? Can I undertake anything of consequence till I have crushed the pride of such a people? It will be but a few days' work. I will grasp the mountain hedgehog, prickles and all, with my steel-gauntlet."

"Your Grace will then have shorter work with them," replied the disguised nobleman, "than our English kings have had with Scotland. The wars there have lasted so long, and proved so bloody, that wise men regret we ever began them."

"Nay," said the Duke, "I will not dishonor the Scots by comparing them in all respects to these mountain churls of the cantons. The Scots have blood and gentry among them, and we have seen many examples of both; these Swiss are a mere brood of peasants, and the few gentlemen of birth they can boast must hide their distinction in the dress and manners of clowns. They will, I think, scarce stand against a charge of Hainaulters."

"Not if the Hainaulters find ground to ride upon. But——"

"Nay, to silence your scruples," said the Duke, interrupting him, "know that these people encourage, by their countenance and aid, the formation of the most dangerous con-

spiracies in my dominions. Look here—I told you that my officer, Sir Archibald de Hagenbach, was murdered when the town of Brisach was treacherously taken by these harmless Switzers of yours. And here is a scroll of parchment which announces that my servant was murdered by doom of the Vehmegericht, a band of secret assassins, whom I will not permit to meet in any part of my dominions. O, could I but catch them above ground as they are found lurking below, they should know what the life of a nobleman is worth! Then, look at the insolence of their attestation."

The scroll bore, with the day and date adjected, that judgment had been done on Archibald de Hagenbach, for tyranny violence, and oppression, by order of the Holy Vehme, and that it was executed by their officials, who were responsible for the same to their tribunal alone. It was countersigned in red ink, with the badges of the Secret Society, a coil of ropes and a drawn dagger.

"This document I found stuck to my toilet with a knife," said the Duke—"another trick by which they give mystery to their murderous jugglery."

The thought of what he had undergone in John Mengs's house, and reflections upon the extent and omnipresence of these secret associations, struck even the brave Englishman with an involuntary shudder.

"For the sake of every saint in Heaven," he said, "forbear, my lord, to speak of these tremendous societies, whose creatures are above, beneath, and around us. No man is secure of his life, however guarded, if it be sought by a man who is careless of his own. You are surrounded by Germans, Italians, and other strangers. How many amongst these may be bound by the secret ties which withdraw men from every other social bond, to unite them together in one inextricable, though secret, compact? Beware, noble Prince, of the situation on which your throne is placed, though it still exhibits all the splendor of power and all the solidity of foundation that belong to so august a structure. I—the friend of thy house—were it with my dying breath, must needs tell thee that the Swiss hang like an avalanche over thy head, and the secret associations work beneath thee like the first throes of the coming earthquake. Provoke not the contest, and the snow will rest undisturbed on the mountainside, the agitation of the subterranean vapors will be hushed to rest; but a single word of defiance or one flash of indignant scorn may call their terrors into instant action."

"You speak," said the Duke, "with more awe of a pack

of naked churls and a band of midnight assassins than I have seen you show for real danger. Yet I will not scorn your council: I will hear the Swiss envoys patiently, and I will not, if I can help it, show the contempt with which I cannot but regard their pretensions to treat as independent states. On the Secret Associations I will be silent, till time gives me the means of acting in combination with the Emperor, the Diet, and the Princes of the Empire, that they may be driven from all their burrows at once. Ha, sir earl, said I well?"

"It is well thought, my lord, but it may be unhappily spoken. You are in a position where one word overheard by a traitor might produce death and ruin."

"I keep no traitors about me," said Charles. "If I thought there were such in my camp, I would rather die by them at once than live in perpetual terror and suspicion."

"Your Highness's ancient followers and servants," said the Earl, "speak unfavorably of the Count of Campo-basso, who holds so high a rank in your confidence."

"Ay," replied the Duke, with composure, "it is easy to decry the most faithful servant in a court by the unanimous hatred of all the others. I warrant me your bull-headed countryman, Colvin, has been railing against the Count like the rest of them; for Campo-basso sees nothing amiss in any department but he reports it to me without fear or favor. And then his opinions are cast so much in the same mold with my own, that I can hardly get him to enlarge upon what he best understands, if it seems in any respect different from my sentiments. Add to this, a noble person, grace, gaiety, skill in the exercises of war and in the courtly arts of peace —such is Campo-basso; and being such, is he not a gem for a prince's cabinet?"

"The very materials out of which a favorite is formed," answered the Earl of Oxford, "but something less adapted for making a faithful counselor."

"Why, thou mistrustful fool," said the Duke, "must I tell thee the very inmost secret respecting this man, Campo-basso, and will nothing short of it stay these imaginary suspicions which thy new trade of an itinerant merchant hath led thee to entertain so rashly?"

"If your Highness honors me with your confidence," said the Earl of Oxford, "I can only say that my fidelity shall deserve it."

"Know then, thou misbelieving mortal, that my good friend and brother, Louis of France, sent me private informa-

tion through no less a person than his famous barber, Oliver le Diable, that Campo-basso had for a certain sum offered to put my person into his hands, alive or dead. You start ?"

"I do, indeed, recollecting your Highness's practise of riding out lightly armed, and with a very small attendance, to reconnoiter the ground and visit the outposts, and therefore how easily such a treacherous devise might be carried into execution."

"Pshaw !" answered the Duke. "Thou seest the danger as if it were real, whereas nothing can be more certain than that, if my cousin of France had ever received such an offer, he would have been the last person to have put me on my guard against the attempt. No, he knows the value I set on Campo-basso's services, and forged the accusation to deprive me of them."

"And yet, my lord," replied the English earl, "your Highness, by my counsel, will not unnecessarily or impatiently fling aside your armor of proof, or ride without the escort of some score of your trusty Walloons."

"Tush, man, thou wouldst make a carbonado of a fever-stirred wretch like myself betwixt the bright iron and the burning sun. But I will be cautious though I jest thus; and you, young man, may assure my cousin, Margaret of Anjou, that I will consider her affairs as my own. And remember, youth, that the secrets of princes are fatal gifts, if he to whom they are imparted blaze them abroad; but if duly treasured up, they enrich the bearer. And thou shalt have cause to say so if thou canst bring back with thee from Aix the deed of resignation of which thy father hath spoken. Good-night—good-night !"

He left the apartment.

"You have just seen," said the Earl of Oxford to his son, "a sketch of this extraordinary prince by his own pencil. It is easy to excite his ambition or thirst of power, but well-nigh impossible to limit him to the just measures by which it is most likely to be gratified. He is ever like the young archer, startled from his mark by some swallow crossing his eye, even careless as he draws the string. Now irregularly and offensively suspicious, now unreservedly lavish of his confidence; not long since the enemy of the line of Lancaster, and ally of her deadly foe, now its last and only stay and hope. God mend all ! It is a weary thing to look on the game and see how it might be won, while we are debarred by the caprice of others from the power of playing it according to our own skill. How much must depend on the decision of

Duke Charles upon the morrow, and how little do I possess the power of influencing him, either for his own safety or our advantage! Good-night, my son, and let us trust events to Him who alone can control them."

CHAPTER XXVII

My blood hath been too cold and temperate,
Unapt to stir at these indignities,
And you have found me; for, accordingly,
You tread upon my patience.

Henry IV.

THE dawn of morning roused the banished Earl of Oxford and his son, and its lights were scarce abroad on the eastern heaven ere their host, Colvin, entered with an attendant, bearing some bundles, which he placed on the floor of the tent, and instantly retired. The officer of the Duke's ordnance then announced that he came with a message from the Duke of Burgundy.

"His Highness," he said, "has sent four stout yeomen, with a commission of credence to my young master of Oxford, and an ample purse of gold, to furnish his expenses to Aix, and while his affairs may detain him there; also a letter of credence to King René, to ensure his reception, and two suits of honor for his use. as for an English gentleman, desirous to witness the festive solemnities of Provence, and in whose safety the Duke deigns to take deep interest. His farther affairs there, if he hath any, his Highness recommends to him to manage with prudence and secrecy. His Highness hath also sent a couple of horses for his use—one an ambling jennet for the road, and another a strong barbed horse of Flanders, in case he hath aught to do. It will be fitting that my young master change his dress, and assume attire more near his proper rank. His attendants know the road, and have power, in case of need, to summon, in the Duke's name, assistance from all faithful Burgundians. I have but to add, the sooner the young gentleman sets forward, it will be the better sign of a successful journey."

"I am ready to mount the instant that I have changed my dress," said Arthur.

"And I," said his father, "have no wish to detain him on the service in which he is now employed. Neither he nor I will say more than 'God be with you.' How and where we are to meet again, who can tell?"

"I believe," said Colvin, "that must rest on the motions

of the Duke, which, perchance, are not yet determined upon; but his Highness depends upon your remaining with him, my noble lord, till the affairs of which you come to treat may be more fully decided. Something I have for your lordship's private ear, when your son hath parted on his journey."

While Colvin was thus talking with his father, Arthur, who was not above half-dressed when he entered the tent, had availed himself of an obscure corner, in which he exchanged the plain garb belonging to his supposed condition as a merchant for such a riding-suit as became a young man of some quality attached to the court of Burgundy. It was not without a natural sensation of pleasure that the youth resumed an apparel suitable to his birth, and which no one was personally more fitted to become; but it was with much deeper feeling that he hastily, and as secretly as possible, flung round his neck, and concealed under the collar and folds of his ornamented doublet, a small thin chain of gold, curiously linked in what was called Morisco work. This was the contents of the parcel which Anne of Geierstein had indulged his feelings, and perhaps her own, by putting into his hands as they parted. The chain was secured by a slight plate of gold, on which a bodkin, or a point of a knife, had traced on the one side, in distinct though light characters, ADIEU FOR EVER! while on the reverse there was much more obscurely traced the word REMEMBER!—A VON G.

All who may read this are, have been, or will be, lovers; and there is none, therefore, who may not be able to comprehend why this token was carefully suspended around Arthur's neck, so that the inscription might rest on the region of his heart, without the interruption of any substance which could prevent the pledge from being agitated by every throb of that busy organ.

This being hastily ensured, a few minutes completed the rest of his toilette; and he kneeled before his father to ask his blessing and his further commands for Aix.

His father blessed him almost inarticulately, and then said, with recovered firmness, that he was already possessed of all the knowledge necessary for success on his mission.

"When you can bring me the deeds wanted," he whispered with more firmness, "you will find me near the person of the Duke of Burgundy."

They went forth of the tent in silence, and found before it the four Burgundian yeomen, tall and active-looking men, ready mounted themselves, and holding two saddled horses—the one accoutered for war, the other a spirited jennet, for

the purposes of the journey. One of them led a sumpter-horse, on which Colvin informed Arthur he would find the change of habit necessary when he should arrive at Aix; and at the same time delivered to him a heavy purse of gold.

"Thiebault," he continued, pointing out the eldest of the attendant troopers, "may be trusted—I will be warrant for his sagacity and fidelity. The other three are picked men, who will not fear their skin-cutting."

Arthur vaulted into the saddle with a sensation of pleasure which was natural to a young cavalier who had not for many months felt a spirited horse beneath him. The lively jennet reared with impatience. Arthur, sitting firm on his seat, as if he had been a part of the animal, only said, "Ere we are long acquainted, thy spirit, my fair roan, will be something more tamed."

"One word more, my son," said his father, and whispered in Arthur's ear, as he stooped from the saddle; "if you receive a letter from me, do not think yourself fully acquainted with the contents till the paper has been held opposite to a hot fire."

Arthur bowed, and motioned to the elder trooper to lead the way, when all, giving rein to their horses, rode off through the encampment at a round pace, the young leader signing an adieu to his father and Colvin.

The Earl stood like a man in a dream, following his son with his eyes, in a kind of reverie, which was only broken when Colvin said, "I marvel not, my lord, that you are anxious about my young master: he is a gallant youth, well worth a father's caring for, and the times we live in are both false and bloody."

"God and St. Mary be my witness," said the Earl, "that if I grieve, it is not for my own house only; if I am anxious, it is not for the sake of my own son alone; but it is hard to risk a last stake in a cause so perilous. What commands brought you from the Duke?"

"His Grace," said Colvin, "will get on horseback after he has breakfasted. He sends you some garments, which, if not fitting your quality, are yet nearer to suitable apparel than those you now wear, and he desires that, observing your incognito as an English merchant of eminence, you will join him in his cavalcade to Dijon, where he is to receive the answer of the Estates of Burgundy concerning matters submitted to their consideration, and thereafter give public audience to the deputies from Switzerland. His Highness has charged me with the care of finding you suitable accom-

modation during the ceremonies of the day, which he thinks you will, as a stranger, be pleased to look upon. But he probably told you all this himself, for I think you saw him last night in disguise. Nay, look as strange as you will—the Duke plays that trick too often to be able to do it with secrecy; the very horse-boys know him while he traverses the tents of the common soldiery, and sutler women give him the name of the spied spy. If it were only honest Harry Colvin who knew this, it should not cross his lips. But it is practised too openly, and too widely known. Come, noble lord, though I must teach my tongue to forego that courtesy, will you along to breakfast?"

The meal, according to the practise of the time, was a solemn and solid one; and a favored officer of the great Duke of Burgundy lacked no means, it may be believed, of rendering due hospitality to a guest having claims of such high respect. But, ere the breakfast was over, a clamorous flourish of trumpets announced that the Duke, with his attendants and retinue, was sounding to horse. Philipson, as he was still called, was, in the name of the Duke, presented with a stately charger, and with his host mingled in the splendid assembly which began to gather in front of the Duke's pavilion. In a few minutes, the Prince himself issued forth, in the superb dress of the Order of the Golden Fleece, of which his father Philip had been the founder, and Charles was himself the patron and sovereign. Several of his courtiers were dressed in the same magnificent robes, and, with their followers and attendants, displayed so much wealth and splendor of appearance as to warrant the common saying, that the Duke of Burgundy maintained the most magnificent court in Christendom. The officers of his household attended in their order, together with heralds and pursuivants, the grotesque richness of whose habits had a singular effect among those of the high clergy in their albes and dalmatiques, and of the knights and crown vassals who were arrayed in armor. Among these last, who were variously equipped, according to the different character of their service, rode Oxford, but in a peaceful habit, neither so plain as to be out of place amongst such splendor, nor so rich as to draw on him a special or particular degree of attention. He rode by the side of Colvin, his tall, muscular figure and deep-marked features forming a strong contrast to the rough, almost ignoble, cast of countenance, and stout, thick-set form, of the less distinguished soldier of fortune.

Ranged into a solemn procession, the rear of which was

closed by a guard of two hundred picked arquebusiers, a description of soldiers who were just then coming into notice, and as many mounted men-at-arms, the Duke and his retinue, leaving the barriers of the camp, directed their march to the town, or rather city, of Dijon, in those days the capital of all Burgundy.

It was a town well secured with walls and ditches, which last were filled by means of a small river, named Dousche [Ouche], which combines its waters for that purpose with a torrent called Suzon. Four gates, with appropriate barbicans, outworks, and drawbridges, corresponded nearly to the cardinal points of the compass, and gave admission to the city. The number of towers, which stood high above its walls, and defended them at different angles, was thirty-three ; and the walls themselves, which exceeded in most places the height of thirty feet, were built of stones hewn and squared, and were of great thickness This stately city was surrounded on the outside with hills covered with vineyards, while from within its walls rose the towers of many noble buildings, both public and private, as well as the steeples of magnificent churches and of well-endowed convents, attesting the wealth and devotion of the house of Burgundy.

When the trumpets of the Duke's procession had summoned the burgher guard at the gate of St. Nicholas, the drawbridge fell, the portcullis rose, the people shouted joyously, the windows were hung with tapestry ; and as, in the midst of his retinue, Charles himself came riding on a milk-white steed, attended only by six pages under fourteen years old, with each a gilded partisan in his hand, the acclamations with which he was received on all sides showed that, if some instances of misrule had diminished his popularity, enough of it remained to render his reception into his capital decorous at least, if not enthusiastic. It is probable that the veneration attached to his father's memory counteracted for a long time the unfavorable effect which some of his own actions were calculated to produce on the public mind.

The procession halted before a large Gothic building in the center of Dijon. This was then called Maison du Duc, as, after the union of Burgundy with France, it was termed Maison du Roy. The *maire* of Dijon attended on the steps before this palace, accompanied by his official brethren, and escorted by a hundred able-bodied citizens, in black velvet cloaks, bearing half-pikes in their hands. The *maire*

kneeled to kiss the stirrup of the Duke, and at the moment when Charles descended from his horse every bell in the city commenced so thundering a peal, that they might almost have awakened the dead who slept in the vicinity of the steeples, which rocked with their clangor. Under the influence of this stunning peal of welcome, the Duke entered the great hall of the building, at the upper end of which were erected a throne for the sovereign, seats for his more distinguished officers of state and higher vassals, with benches behind for persons of less note. On one of these, but in a spot from which he might possess a commanding view of the whole assembly, as well as of the Duke himself, Colvin placed the noble Englishman; and Charles, whose quick, stern eye glanced rapidly over the party when they were seated, seemed, by a nod so slight as to be almost imperceptible to those around him, to give his approbation of the arrangement adopted.

When the Duke and his assistants were seated and in order, the *maire,* again approaching, in the most humble manner, and kneeling on the lowest step of the ducal throne, requested to know if his Highness's leisure permitted him to hear the inhabitants of his capital express their devoted zeal to his person, and to accept the benevolence which, in the shape of a silver cup filled with gold pieces, he had the distinguished honor to place before his feet, in name of the citizens and community of Dijon.

Charles, who at no time affected much courtesy, answered briefly and bluntly, with a voice which was naturally harsh and dissonant, "All things in their order, good Master *Maire.* Let us first hear what the Estates of Burgundy have to say to us; we will then listen to the burghers of Dijon."

The *maire* rose and retired, bearing in his hand the silver cup, and experiencing probably some vexation, as well as surprise, that its contents had not secured an instant and gracious acceptance.

"I expected," said Duke Charles, "to have met at this hour and place our Estates of the duchy of Burgundy, or a deputation of them, with an answer to our message conveyed to them three days since by our chancelor. Is there no one here on their part?"

The *maire,* as none else made any attempt to answer, said that the members of the Estates had been in close deliberation the whole of that morning, and doubtless would instantly wait upon his Highness when they heard that he had honored the town with his presence.

"Go, Toison d'Or," said the Duke to the herald of the order of the Golden Fleece,* "bear to these gentlemen the tidings that we desire to know the end of their deliberations; and that neither in courtesy nor in loyalty can they expect us to wait long. Be round with them, sir herald, or we shall be as round with you."

While the herald was absent on his mission, we may remind our readers that, in all feudalized countries (that is to say, in almost all Europe during the middle ages), an ardent spirit of liberty pervaded the constitution; and the only fault that could be found was, that the privileges and freedom for which the great vassals contended did not sufficiently descend to the lower orders of society, or extend protection to those who were most likely to need it. The two first ranks in the estate, the nobles and clergy, enjoyed high and important privileges, and even the third estate, or citizens, had this immunity in peculiar, that no new duties, customs, or taxes of any kind could be exacted from them save by their own consent.

The memory of Duke Philip, the father of Charles, was dear to the Burgundians; for during twenty years that sage prince had maintained his rank among the sovereigns of Europe with much dignity, and had accumulated treasure without exacting or receiving any great increase of supplies from the rich countries which he governed. But the extravagant schemes and immoderate expense of Duke Charles had already excited the suspicion of his Estates; and the mutual good-will betwixt the prince and people began to be exchanged for suspicion and distrust on the one side and defiance on the other. The refractory disposition of the Estates had of late increased, for they had disapproved of various wars in which their Duke had needlessly embarked; and from his levying such large bodies of mercenary troops, they came to suspect he might finally employ the wealth voted to him by his subjects for the undue extension of his royal prerogative, and the destruction of the liberties of the people.

At the same time the Duke's uniform success in enterprises which appeared desperate as well as difficult, esteem for the frankness and openness of his character, and dread of the obstinacy and headstrong tendency of a temper which could seldom bear persuasion, and never endured opposition, still threw awe and terror around the throne, which was materi-

* The chief order of knighthood in the state of Burgundy.

ally aided by the attachment of the common people to the person of the present duke and to the memory of his father. It had been understood that upon the present occasion there was strong opposition amongst the Estates to the system of taxation proposed on the part of the Duke, and the issue was expected with considerable anxiety by the Duke's counselors, and with fretful impatience by the sovereign himself.

After a space of about ten minutes had elapsed, the Chancellor of Burgundy, who was Archbishop of Vienne, and a prelate of high rank, entered the hall with his train; and passing behind the ducal throne to occupy one of the most distinguished places in the assembly, he stopped for a moment to urge his master to receive the answer of his Estates in a private manner, giving him at the same time to understand that the result of the deliberations had been by no means satisfactory.

"By St. George of Burgundy, my Lord Archbishop," answered the Duke, sternly and aloud, "we are not a prince of a mind so paltry that we need to shun the moody looks of a discontented and insolent faction. If the Estates of Burgundy send a disobedient and disloyal answer to our paternal message, let them deliver it in open court that the assembled people may learn how to decide between their duke and those petty yet intriguing spirits who would interfere with our authority."

The chancellor bowed gravely and took his seat; while the English earl observed, that the most of the members of the assembly, excepting such as in doing so could not escape the Duke's notice, passed some observations to their neighbors, which was received with a half-suppressed nod, shrug, or shake of the head, as men treat a proposal upon which it is dangerous to decide. At time, Toison d'Or, who acted as master of ceremonies, introduced into the hall a committee of the Estates, consisting of twelve members, four from each branch of the Estates, announced as empowered to deliver the answer of that assembly to the Duke of Burgundy.

When the deputation entered the hall, Charles arose from his throne, according to ancient custom, and taking from his head his bonnet, charged with a huge plume of feathers, "Health and welcome," he said, "to my good subjects of the Estates of Burgundy!" All the numerous train of courtiers rose and uncovered their heads with the same ceremony. The members of the states then dropped on one knee, the four ecclesiastics, among whom Oxford recognized the black priest of St. Paul's, approaching nearest to the Duke's

person, the nobles kneeling behind them, and the burgesses in the rear of the whole.

"Noble Duke," said the priest of St. Paul's, "will it best please you to hear the answer of your good and loyal Estates of Burgundy by the voice of one member speaking for the whole, or by three persons, each delivering the sense of the body to which he belongs?"

"As you will," said the Duke of Burgundy.

"A priest, a noble, and a free burgher," said the churchman, still on one knee, "will address your Highness in succession. For though, blessed be the God who leads brethren to dwell together in unity! we are agreed in the general answer, yet each body of the Estates may have special and separate reasons to allege for the common opinion."

"We will hear you separately," said Duke Charles, casting his hat upon his head, and throwing himself carelessly back into his seat. At the same time, all who were of noble blood, whether in the committee or amongst the spectators, vouched their right to be peers of their sovereign by assuming their bonnets; and a cloud of waving plumes at once added grace and dignity to the assembly.

When the Duke resumed his seat, the deputation arose from their knees, and the black priest of St. Paul's, again stepping forth, addressed him in these words:—

"My Lord Duke, your loyal and faithful clergy have considered your Highness's proposal to lay a talliage on your people, in order to make war on the Confederate Cantons in the country of the Alps. The quarrel, my liege lord, seems to your clergy an unjust and oppressive one on your Highness's part, nor can they hope that God will bless those who arm in it. They are therefore compelled to reject your Highness's proposal."

The Duke's eye lowered gloomily on the deliverer of this unpalatable message. He shook his head with one of those stern and menacing looks which the harsh composition of his features rendered them peculiarly qualified to express. "You have spoken, sir priest," was the only reply which he deigned to make.

One of the four nobles, the S re de Myrebeau, then expressed himself thus:—

"Your Highness has asked of your faithful nobles to consent to new imposts and exactions, to be levied through Burgundy, for the raising of additional bands of hired soldiers for the maintenance of the quarrels of the state. My lord, the swords of the Burgundian nobles, knights, and

gentlemen have been ever at your Highness's command, as those of our ancestors have been readily wielded for your predecessors. In your Highness's just quarrel we will go farther, and fight firmer, than any hired fellows who can be procured, whether from France, or Germany, or Italy. We will not give our consent that the people should be taxed for paying mercenaries to discharge that military duty which it is alike our pride and our exclusive privilege to render."

"You have spoken, Sire de Myrebeau," were again the only words of the Duke's reply. He uttered them slowly and with deliberation, as if afraid lest some phrase of imprudent violence should escape along with what he purposed to say. Oxford thought he cast a glance towards him before he spoke, as if the consciousness of his presence was some additional restraint on his passion. "Now, Heaven grant," he said to himself, "that this opposition may work its proper effect, and induce the Duke to renounce an imprudent attempt, so hazardous and so unnecessary!"

While he muttered these thoughts, the Duke made a sign to one of the *tiers état,* or commons, to speak in his turn. The person who obeyed the signal was Martin Block, a wealthy butcher and grazier of Dijon. His words were these:—"Noble Prince, our fathers were the dutiful subjects of your predecessors; we are the same to you; our children will be alike the liegemen of your successors. But, touching the request your chancellor has made to us, it is such as our ancestors never complied with, such as we are determined to refuse, and such as will never be conceded by the Estates of Burgundy to any prince whatsoever, even to the end of time."

Charles had borne with impatient silence the speeches of the two former orators; but this blunt and hardy reply of the third Estate excited him beyond what his nature could endure. He gave way to the impetuosity of his disposition, stamped on the floor till the throne shook and the high vault rung over their heads, and overwhelmed the bold burgher with reproaches. "Beast of Burden," he said, "am I to be stunned with thy braying, too? The nobles may claim leave to speak, for they can fight; the clergy may use their tongues, for it is their trade; but thou, that hast never shed blood, save that of bullocks more stupid than thou art thyself—must thou and thy herd come hither, privileged, forsooth, to bellow at a prince's footstool? Know, brute as thou art, that steers are never introduced into temples but to be sacrificed, or butchers and mechanics brought before

their sovereign, save that they may have the honor to supply the public wants from their own swelling hoards!"

A murmur of displeasure, which even the terror of the Duke's wrath could not repress, ran through the audience at these words; and the burgher of Dijon, a sturdy plebeian, replied, with little reverence—"Our purses, my Lord Duke, are our own; we will not put the strings of them into your Highness's hands, unless we are satisfied with the purposes to which the money is to be applied; and we know well how to protect our persons and our goods against foreign ruffians and plunderers."

Charles was on the point of ordering the deputy to be arrested, when, having cast his eye towards the Earl of Oxford, whose presence, in despite of himself, imposed a certain degree of restraint upon him, he exchanged that piece of imprudence for another.

"I see," he said, addressing the committee of Estates "that you are all leagued to disappoint my purposes, and doubtless to deprive me of all the power of a sovereign save that of wearing a coronet, and being served on the knee like a second Charles the Simple, while the Estates of my kingdom divide the power among them. But you shall know that you have to do with Charles of Burgundy—a prince who, though he has deigned to consult you, is fully able to fight battles without the aid of his nobles, since they refuse him the assistance of their swords; to defray the expense without the help of his sordid burghers; and, it may be, to find out a path to Heaven without the assistance of an ungrateful priesthood. I will show all that are here present how little my mind is affected, or my purpose changed, by your seditious reply to the message with which I honored you. Here, Toison d'Or, admit into our presence these men from the confederated towns and cantons, as they call themselves, of Switzerland."

Oxford, and all who really interested themselves in the Duke's welfare, heard, with the utmost apprehension, his resolution to give an audience to the Swiss envoys, prepossessed as he was against them, and in the moment when his mood was chafed to the uttermost by the refusal of the Estates to grant him supplies. They were aware that obstacles opposed to the current of his passion were like rocks in the bed of a river, whose course they cannot interrupt, while they provoke it to rage and foam. All were sensible that the die was cast, but none who were not endowed with more than mortal prescience could have imagined how deep was the

pledge which depended upon it. Oxford in particular, conceived that the execution of his plan of a descent upon England was the principal point compromised by the Duke in his rash obstinacy; but he suspected not—he dreamed not of supposing—that the life of Charles himself, and the independence of Burgundy as a separate kingdom, hung quivering in the same scales.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Why, 'tis a boisterous and cruel style,
A style for challengers. Why, she defies us,
Like Turk to Christian.

As You Like It.

THE doors of the hall were now opened to the Swiss deputies, who for the preceding hour had been kept in attendance on the outside of the building, without receiving the slightest of those attentions which among civilized nations are universally paid to the representatives of a foreign state. Indeed, their very appearance, dressed in coarse gray frocks, like mountain hunters or shepherds, in the midst of an assembly blazing with divers-colored garments, gold and silver lace, embroidery, and precious stones, served to confirm the idea that they could only have come hither in the capacity of the most humble petitioners.

Oxford, however, who watched closely the deportment of his late fellow-travelers, failed not to observe that they retained each in his own person the character of firmness and indifference which formerly distinguished them. Rudolph Donnerhugel preserved his bold and haughty look ; the banneret, the military indifference which made him look with apparent apathy on all around him ; the burgher of Soleure was as formal and important as ever ; nor did any of the three show themselves affected in the slightest degree by the splendor of the scene around them, or embarrassed by the consideration of their own comparative inferiority of appointments. But the noble Landamman, on whom Oxford chiefly bent his attention, seemed overwhelmed with a sense of the precarious state in which his country was placed, fearing, from the rude and unhonored manner in which they were received, that war was unavoidable, while, at the same time, like a good patriot, he mourned over the consequences of ruin to the freedom of his country by defeat, or injury to her simplicity and virtuous indifference of wealth by the introduction of foreign luxuries and the evils attending on conquest.

Well acquainted with the opinions of Arnold Biederman, Oxford could easily explain his sadness, while his comrade

Bonstetten, less capable of comprehending his friend's feelings, looked at him with the expression which may be seen in the countenance of a faithful dog, when the creature indicates sympathy with his master's melancholy, though unable to ascertain or appreciate its cause. A look of wonder now and then glided around the splendid assembly on the part of all the forlorn group, excepting Donnerhugel and the Landamman; for the indomitable pride of the one and the steady patriotism of the other could not for even an instant be diverted by external objects from their own deep and stern reflections.

After a silence of nearly five minutes, the Duke spoke, with the haughty and harsh manner which he might imagine belonged to his place, and which certainly expressed his character.

"Men of Berne, of Schwytz, or of whatever hamlet and wilderness you may represent, know that we had not honored you, rebels as you are to the dominion of your lawful superiors, with an audience in our own presence, but for the intercession of a well-esteemed friend, who has sojourned among your mountains and whom you may know by the name of Philipson an Englishman, following the trade of a merchant and charged with certain valuable matters of traffic to our court. To his intercession we have so far given way, that, instead of commanding you, according to your demerits, to the gibbet and the wheel in the Place de Morimont, we have condescended to receive you into our own presence, sitting in our *cour plénière,* to hear from you such submission as you can offer for your outrageous storm of our town of La Ferette, the slaughter of many of our liegemen, and the deliberate murder of the noble knight, Archibald of Hagenbach, executed in your presence, and by your countenance and device. Speak, if you can say aught in defense of your felony and treason, either to deprecate just punishment or crave undeserved mercy."

The Landamman seemed about to answer; but Rudolph Donnerhugel, with his characteristic boldness and hardihood, took the task of reply on himself. He confronted the proud Duke with an eye unappalled, and a countenance as stern as his own.

"We came not here," he said, "to compromise our own honor, or the dignity of the free people whom we represent, by pleading guilty in their name or our own to crimes of which we are innocent. And when you term us rebels, you must remember that a long train of victories, whose history

is written in the noblest blood of Austria, has restored to the confederacy of our communities the freedom of which an unjust tyranny in vain attempted to deprive us. While Austria was a just and beneficent mistress, we served her with our lives; when she became oppressive and tyrannical, we assumed independence. If she has aught yet to claim from us, the descendants of Tell, Faust [Furst], and Stauffaucher will be as ready to assert their liberties as their fathers were to gain them. Your Grace—if such be your title—has no concern with any dispute betwixt us and Austria. For your threats of gibbet and wheel, we are here defenseless men, on whom you may work your pleasure; but we know how to die, and our countrymen know how to avenge us."

The fiery Duke would have replied by commanding the instant arrest, and probably the immediate execution, of the whole deputation. But his chancellor, availing himself of the privilege of his office, rose, and, doffing his cap with a deep reverence to the Duke, requested leave to reply to the misproud young man, who had, he said, so greatly mistaken the purpose of his Highness's speech.

Charles, feeling perhaps at the moment too much irritated to form a calm decision, threw himself back in his chair of state, and with an impatient and angry nod gave his chancellor permission to speak.

"Young man," said that high officer, "you have mistaken the meaning of the high and mighty sovereign in whose presence you stand. Whatever be the lawful rights of Austria over the revolted villages which have flung off their allegiance to their native superior, we have no call to enter on that argument. But that for which Burgundy demands your answer is wherefore, coming here in the guise and with the character of peaceful envoys, on affairs touching your own communities and the rights of the Duke's subjects, you have raised war in our peaceful dominions, stormed a fortress, massacred its garrison, and put to death a noble knight, its commander?—all of them actions contrary to the law of nations, and highly deserving of the punishment with which you have been justly threatened but with which I hope our gracious sovereign will dispense, if you express some sufficient reason for such outrageous insolence, with an offer of due submission to his Highness's pleasure and satisfactory reparation for such a high injury."

"You are a priest, grave sir?" answered Rudolph Donnerhugel, addressing the Chancellor of Burgundy. "If there be a soldier in this assembly who will avouch your

"'I set at all,' said the daring young Swiss."

charge, I challenge him to the combat, man to man. We did not storm the garrison of La Ferette : we were admitted into the gates in a peaceful manner, and were there instantly surrounded by the soldiers of the late Archibald de Hagenbach, with the obvious purpose of assaulting and murdering us on our peaceful mission. I promise you there had been news of more men dying than us. But an uproar broke out among the inhabitants of the town, assisted, I believe, by many neighbors, to whom the insolence and oppression of Archibald de Hagenbach had become odious, as to all who were with in his reach. We rendered them no assistance; and, I trust, it was not expected that we should interfere in the favor of men who had stood prepared to do the worst against us. But not a pike or sword belonging to us or our attendants was dipped in Burgundian blood. Archibald de Hagenbach perished, it is true, on a scaffold, and I saw him die with pleasure, under a sentence pronounced by a competent court, such as is recognized in Westphalia and its dependencies on this side of the Rhine. I am not obliged to vindicate their proceedings ; but I aver, that the Duke has received full proof of his regular sentence ; and, in fine, that it was amply deserved by oppression, tyranny, and foul abuse of his authority, I will uphold against all gainsayers, with the body of a man. There lies my glove."

And, with an action suited to the language he used, the stern Swiss flung his right-hand glove on the floor of the hall. In the spirit of the age, with the love of distinction in arms which it nourished, and perhaps with the desire of gaining the Duke's favor, there was a general motion among the young Burgundians to accept the challenge, and more than six or eight gloves were hastily doffed by the young knights present, those who were more remote flinging them over the heads of the nearest, and each proclaiming his name and title as he proffered the gage of combat.

"I set at all," said the daring young Swiss, gathering the gauntlets as they fell clashing around him. "More, gentlemen—more ! a glove for every finger ! come on, one at once —fair lists, equal judges of the field, the combat on foot, and the weapons two-handed swords, and I will not budge for a score of you."

"Hold, gentlemen—on your allegiance, hold !" said the Duke, gratified at the same time and somewhat appeased by the zeal which was displayed in his cause ; moved by the strain of reckless bravery evinced by the challenger, with a hardihood akin to his own ; perhaps also not unwilling to

display, in the view of his *cour plénière,* more temperance than he had been at first capable of. "Hold, I command you all. Toison d'Or, gather up these gauntlets, and return them each to his owner. God and St. George forbid that we should hazard the life of even the least of our noble Burgundian gentry against such a churl as this Swiss peasant, who never so much as mounted a horse, and knows not a jot of knightly courtesy or the grace of chivalry. Carry your vulgar brawls elsewhere, young man, and know that, on the present occasion, the Place Morimont were your only fitting lists, and the hangman your meet antagonist. And you, sirs, his companions, whose behavior in suffering this swaggerer to take the lead amongst you seems to show that the laws of nature, as well as of society, are inverted, and that youth is preferred to age, as peasants to gentry—you white-bearded men, I say, is there none of you who can speak your errand in such language as it becomes a sovereign prince to listen to ?"

"God forbid else," said the Landamman, stepping forward and silencing Rudolph Donnerhugel, who was commencing an answer of defiance—"God forbid," he said, "noble Duke, that we should not be able to speak so as to be understood before your Highness, since, I trust, we shall speak the language of truth, peace, and justice. Nay, should it incline your Highness to listen to us the more favorably for our humility, I am willing to humble myself rather than you should shun to hear us. For my own part, I can truly say that, though I have lived, and by free choice have resolved to die, a husbandman and a hunter on the Alps of the Unterwald, I may claim by birth the hereditary right to speak before dukes and kings, and the Emperor himself. There is no one, my Lord Duke, in this proud assembly who derives his descent from a nobler source than Geierstein."

"We have heard of you," said the Duke. "Men call you the peasant count. Your birth is your shame—or perhaps your mother's, if your father had happened to have a handsome plowman, the fitting father of one who has become a willing serf."

"No serf, my lord," answered the Landamman, "but a freeman, who will neither oppress others nor be himself tyrannized over. My father was a noble lord, my mother a most virtuous lady. But I will not be provoked by taunt or scornful jest to refrain from stating with calmness what my country has given me in charge to say. The inhabitants of the bleak and inhospitable regions of the Alps desire, mighty

sir, to remain at peace with all their neighbors, and to enjoy the government they have chosen, as best fitted to their condition and habits, leaving all other states and countries to their free-will in the same respects. Especially, they desire to remain at peace and in unity with the princely house of Burgundy, whose dominions approach their possessions on so many points. My lord, they desire it, they entreat it, they even consent to pray for it. We have been termed stubborn, intractable, and insolent contemners of authority, and headers of sedition and rebellion. In evidence of the contrary, my Lord Duke, I, who never bent a knee but to Heaven, feel no dishonor in kneeling before your Highness, as before a sovereign prince in the *cour plénière* of his dominions, where he has a right to exact homage from his subjects out of duty, and from strangers out of courtesy. No vain pride of mine," said the noble old man, his eyes swelling with tears, as he knelt on one knee, "shall prevent me from personal humiliation, when peace—that blessed peace, so dear to God, so inappreciably valuable to man—is in danger of being broken off."

The whole assembly, even the Duke himself, were affected by the noble and stately manner in which the brave old man made a genuflection, which was obviously dictated by neither meanness nor timidity. "Arise, sir," said Charles; "if we have said aught which can wound your private feelings, we retract it as publicly as the reproach was spoken, and sit prepared to hear you as a fair-meaning envoy."

"For that, my noble lord, thanks; and I shall hold it a blessed day if I can find words worthy of the cause I have to plead. My lord, a schedule in your Highness's hands has stated the sense of many injuries received at the hand of your Highness's officers, and those of Romont Count of Savoy, your strict ally and adviser, we have a right to suppose, under your Highness's countenance. For Count Romont, he has already felt with whom he has to contend; but we have as yet taken no measures to avenge injuries, affronts, interruptions to our commerce, from those who have availed themselves of your Highness's authority to intercept our countrymen, spoil our goods, impress their persons, and even, in some instances, take their lives, The affray at La Ferette—I can vouch for what I saw—had no origin or abettance from us; nevertheless, it is impossible an independent nation can suffer the repetition of such injuries, and free and independent we are determined to remain, or to die in defense of our rights. What, then, must follow, unless your

Highness listens to the terms which I am commissioned to offer? War—a war to extermination; for so long as one of our confederacy can wield a halberd, so long, if this fatal strife once commences, there will be war betwixt your powerful realms and our poor and barren states. And what can the noble Duke of Burgundy gain by such a strife? Is it wealth and plunder? Alas, my lord, there is more gold and silver on the very bridle-bits of your Highness's household troops than can be found in the public treasures or private hoards of our whole confederacy. Is it fame and glory you aspire to? There is little honor to be won by a numerous army over a few scattered bands, by men clad in mail over half-armed husbandmen and shepherds—of such conquest small were the glory. But if, as all Christian men believe, and as it is the constant trust of my countrymen, from memory of the times of our fathers—if the Lord of Hosts should cast the balance in behalf of the fewer numbers and worse-armed party, I leave it with your Highness to judge what would, in that event, be the diminution of worship and fame. Is it extent of vassalage and dominion your Highness desires, by warring with your mountain neighbors? Know that you may, if it be God's will, gain our barren and rugged mountains; but, like our ancestors of old, we will seek refuge in wilder and more distant solitudes, and when we have resisted to the last, we will starve in the icy wastes of the glaciers. Ay, men, women, and children, we will be frozen into annihilation together, ere one free Switzer will acknowledge a foreign master."

The speech of the Landamman made an obvious impression on the assembly. The Duke observed it, and his hereditary obstinacy was irritated by the general disposition which he saw entertained in favor of the ambassador. This evil principle overcame some impression which the address of the noble Biederman had not failed to make upon him. He answered with a lowering brow, interrupting the old man as he was about to continue his speech—"You argue falsely, sir count, or sir landamman, or by whatever name you call yourself, if you think we war on you from any hope of spoil, or any desire of glory. We know as well as you can tell us that there is neither profit nor fame to be achieved by conquering you. But sovereigns, to whom Heaven has given the power, must root out a band of robbers, though there is dishonor in measuring swords with them; and we hunt to death a herd of wolves, though their flesh is carrion and their skins are nought."

The Landamman shook his gray head, and replied, without testifying emotion, and even with something approaching to a smile—"I am an older woodsman than you, my Lord Duke, and, it may be, a more experienced one. The boldest, the hardiest hunter will not safely drive the wolf to his den. I have shown your Highness the poor chance of gain and the great risk of loss, which even you, powerful as you are, must incur by risking a war with determined and desperate men. Let me now tell what we are willing to do to secure a sincere and lasting peace with our powerful neighbor of Burgundy. Your Grace is in the act of engrossing Lorraine, and it seems probable, under so vigorous and enterprising a prince, your authority may be extended to the shores of the Mediterranean; be our noble friend and sincere ally, and our mountains, defended by warriors familiar with victory, will be your barriers against Germany and Italy. For your sake we will admit the Count of Savoy to terms, and restore to him our conquests, on such conditions as your Highness shall yourself judge reasonable. Of past subjects of offense on the part of your lieutenants and governors upon the frontier we will be silent, so we have assurance of no such aggressions in future. Nay more, and it is my last and proudest offer, we will send three thousand of our youth to assist your Highness in any war which you may engage in, whether against Louis of France or the Emperor of Germany. They are a different set of men—proudly and truly may I state it—from the scum of Germany and Italy, who form themselves into mercenary bands of soldiers. And, if Heaven should decide your Highness to accept our offer, there will be one corps in your army which will leave their carcasses on the field ere a man of them break their plighted troth."

A swarthy, but tall and handsome, man, wearing a corslet richly engraved with arabesque work, started from his seat with the air of one provoked beyond the bounds of restraint. This was the Count de Campo-basso, commander of Charles's Italian mercenaries, who possessed, as has been alluded to, much influence over the Duke's mind, chiefly obtained by accommodating himself to his master's opinions and prejudices, and placing before the Duke specious arguments to justify him for following his own way.

"This lofty presence must excuse me," he said, "if I speak in defense of my honor, and those of my bold lances, who have followed my fortunes from Italy to serve the bravest prince in Christendom. I might, indeed, pass over without resentment to outrageous language of this gray-haired churl,

whose words cannot affect a knight and a nobleman more than the yelling of a peasant's mastiff. But when I hear him propose to associate his band of mutinous, misgoverned ruffians with your Highness's troops, I must let him know that there is not a horse-boy in my ranks who would fight in such fellowship. No, even I myself, bound by a thousand ties of gratitude, could not submit to strive abreast with such comrades. I would fold up my banners, and lead five thousand men to seek—not a nobler master, for the world has none such—but wars in which we might not be obliged to blush for our assistants."

"Silence, Campo-basso," said the Duke, "and be assured you serve a prince who knows your worth too well to exchange it for the untried and untrustful services of those whom we have only known as vexatious and malignant neighbors."

Then addressing himself to Arnold Biederman, he said coldly and sternly, "Sir Landamman, we have heard you fairly. We have heard you, although you come before us with hands dyed deep in the blood of our servant, Sir Archibald de Hagenbach; for, supposing he was murdered by a villainous association—which, by St. George! shall never, while we live and reign, raise its pestilential head on this side of the Rhine—yet it is not the less undeniable and undenied, that you stood by in arms, and encouraged the deed the assassins performed under your countenance. Return to your mountains, and be thankful that you return in life. Tell those who sent you that I will be presently on their frontiers. A deputation of your most notable persons, who meet me with halters round their necks, torches in their left hands, in their right their swords held by the point, may learn on what conditions we will grant you peace."

"Then farewell peace, and welcome war," said the Landamman; "and be its plagues and curses on the heads of those who choose blood and strife rather than peace and union! We will meet you on our frontiers with our naked swords, but the hilts, not their points, shall be in our grasp. Charles of Burgundy, Flanders, and Lorraine, Duke of seven [six] dukedoms, Count of seventeen [fifteen] earldoms, I bid you defiance; and declare war against you in the name of the Confederated Cantons, and such others as shall adhere to them. There," he said, "are my letters of defiance."

The herald took from Arnold Biederman the fatal denunciation.

"Read it not, Toison d'Or!" said the haughty Duke.

"Let the executioner drag it through the streets at his horse's tail, and nail it to the gibbet, to show in what account we hold the paltry scroll, and those who sent it. Away, sirs," speaking to the Swiss, "trudge back to your wildernesses with such haste as your feet can use. When we next meet, you shall better know whom you have offended. Get our horses ready; the council is broken up."

The *maire* of Dijon, when all were in motion to leave the hall, again approached the Duke, and timidly expressed some hopes that his Highness would deign to partake of a banquet which the magistracy had prepared, in expectation he might do them such an honor.

"No, by St. George of Burgundy, sir *maire*," said Charles, with one of the withering glances by which he was wont to express indignation mixed with contempt; "you have not pleased us so well with our breakfast as to induce us to trust our dinner to the loyalty of our good town of Dijon."

So saying, he rudely turned off from the mortified chief magistrate, and, mounting his horse, rode back to his camp, conversing earnestly on the way with the Count of Campobasso.

"I would offer you dinner, my Lord of Oxford," said Colvin to that nobleman, when he alighted at his tent, "but I foresee, ere you could swallow a mouthful, you will be summoned to the Duke's presence; for it is our Charles's way, when he has fixed on a wrong course, to wrangle with his friends and counselors, in order to prove it is a right one. Marry, he always makes a convert of yon supple Italian."

Colvin's augury was speedily realized, for a page almost immediately summoned the English merchant, Philipson, to attend the Duke. Without waiting an instant, Charles poured forth an incoherent tide of reproaches against the Estates of his dukedom, for refusing him their countenance in so slight a matter, and launched out in explanations of the necessity which he alleged there was for punishing the audacity of the Swiss. "And thou too, Oxford," he concluded, "art such an impatient fool as to wish me to engage in a distant war with England, and transport forces over the sea, when I have such insolent mutineers to chastise on my own frontiers?"

When he was at length silent, the English earl laid before him, with respectful earnestness, the danger that appeared to be involved in engaging with a people, poor indeed, but universally dreaded, from their discipline and courage, and that under the eye of so dangerous a rival as Louis of France,

who was sure to support the Duke's enemies underhand, if he did not join them openly. On this point the Duke's resolution was immovable. "It shall never," he said, "be told of me, that I uttered threats which I dared not execute. These boors have declared war against me, and they shall learn whose wrath it is that they have wantonly provoked; but I do not, therefore, renounce thy scheme, my good Oxford. If thou canst procure me this same cession of Provence, and induce old René to give up the cause of his grandson, Ferrand of Vaudemont, in Lorraine, thou wilt make it well worth my while to send thee brave aid against my brother Blackburn, who, while he is drinking healths pottle-deep in France, may well come to lose his lands in England. And be not impatient because I cannot at this very instant send men across the seas. The march which I am making towards Neufchatel, which is, I think, the nearest point where I shall find these churls, will be but like a morning's excursion. I trust you will go with us, old companion. I should like to see if you have forgotten, among yonder mountains, how to back a horse and lay a lance in rest."

"I will wait on your Highness," said the Earl, "as is my duty, for my motions must depend on your pleasure. But I will not carry arms, especially against those people of Helvetia, from whom I have experienced hospitality, unless it be for my own personal defense."

"Well," replied the Duke, "e'en be it so; we shall have in you an excellent judge, to tell us who best discharges his devoir against the mountain clowns."

At this point in the conversation there was a knocking at the entrance of the pavilion, and the Chancellor of Burgundy presently entered, in great haste and anxiety. "News, my lord—news of France and England," said the prelate, and then, observing the presence of a stranger, he looked at the Duke and was silent.

"It is a faithful friend, my Lord Bishop," said the Duke; "you may tell your news before him."

"It will soon be generally known," said the chancellor—"Louis and Edward are fully accorded."

Both the Duke and the English earl started.

"I expected this," said the Duke, "but not so soon."

"The kings have met," answered his minister.

"How—in battle?" said Oxford, forgetting himself in his extreme eagerness.

The chancellor was somewhat surprised, but, as the Duke seemed to expect him to give an answer, he replied, "No,

sir stranger, not in battle, but upon appointment, and in peace and amity."

"The sight must have been worth seeing," said the Duke, "when the old fox Louis and my brother Black—I mean my brother Edward—met. Where held they their rendezvous?"

"On a bridge over the Seine, at Picquigny."

"I would thou hadst been there," said the Duke, looking to Oxford, "with a good ax in thy hand, to strike one fair blow for England and another for Burgundy. My grandfather was treacherously slain at just such a meeting, at the bridge of Montereau, upon the Yonne."

"To prevent a similar chance," said the chancellor, "a strong barricade, such as closes the cages in which men keep wild beasts, was raised in the midst of the bridge, and prevented the possibility of their even touching each other's hands."

"Ha—ha! By St. George, that smells of Louis's craft and caution; for the Englishman, to give him his due, is as little acquainted with fear as with policy. But what terms have they made? Where do the English army winter? What towns, fortresses, and castles are surrendered to them, in pledge or in perpetuity?"

"None, my liege," said the chancellor. "The English army returns into England as fast as shipping can be procured to transport them; and Louis will accommodate them with every sail and oar in his dominions, rather than they should not instantly evacuate France."

"And by what concessions has Louis bought a peace so necessary to his affairs?"

"By fair words," said the chancellor, "by liberal presents, and by some five hundred tuns of wine."

"Wine!" exclaimed the Duke. "Heardst thou ever the like, Signior Philipson? Why, your countrymen are little little better than Esau, who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Marry, I must confess I never saw an Englishman who loved a dry-lipped bargain."

"I can scarce believe this news," said the Earl of Oxford. "If this Edward were content to cross the sea with fifty thousand Englishmen merely to return again, there are in his camp both proud nobles and haughty commons enough to resist his disgraceful purpose."

"The money of Louis," said the statesman, "has found noble hands willing to clutch it. The wine of France has flooded every throat in the English army; the riot and uproar was unbounded: and at one time the town of Amiens,

where Louis himself resided, was full of so many English archers, all of them intoxicated, that the person of the King of France was almost in their hands. Their sense of national honor has been lost in the universal revel, and those amongst them who would be more dignified, and play the wise politicians, say that, having come to France by connivance of the Duke of Burgundy, and that prince having failed to join them with his forces, they have done well, wisely, and gallantly, considering the season of the year, and the impossibility of obtaining quarters, to take tribute of France, and return home in triumph."

"And leave Louis," said Oxford, "at undisturbed freedom to attack Burgundy with all his forces?"

"Not so, friend Philipson," said the Duke Charles; "know, that there is a truce betwixt Burgundy and France for the space of seven years, and had not this been granted and signed, it is probable that we might have found some means of marring the treaty betwixt Edward and Louis, even at the expense of affording those voracious islanders beef and beer during the winter months. Sir chancellor, you may leave us, but be within reach of a hasty summons."

When his minister left the pavilion, the Duke, who with his rude and imperious character united much kindness, if it could not be termed generosity, of disposition, came up to the Lancastrian lord, who stood like one at whose feet a thunderbolt has just broken, and who is still appalled by the terrors of the shock.

"My poor Oxford," he said, "thou art stupefied by this news, which thou canst not doubt must have a fatal effect on the plan which thy brave bosom cherishes with such devoted fidelity. I would for thy sake I could have detained the English a little longer in France; but had I attempted to do so, there were an end of my truce with Louis, and of course to my power to chastise these paltry cantons, or send forth an expedition to England. As matters stand, give me but a week to punish these mountaineers, and you shall have a larger force than your modesty has requested of me for your enterprise; and, in the meanwhile, I will take care that Blackburn and his cousin-archers have no assistance of shipping from Flanders. Tush, man, never fear it—thou wilt be in England long ere they; and, once more, rely on my assistance—always, thou knowest, the cession of Provence being executed, as in reason. Our cousin Margaret's diamonds we must keep for a time; and perhaps they may pass as a pledge, with some of our own, for the godly purpose of

setting at freedom the imprisoned angels of our Flemish usurers, who will not lend even to their sovereign, unless on good current security. To such straits has the disobedient avarice of our Estates for the moment reduced us."

"Alas! my lord," said the dejected nobleman, "I were ungrateful to doubt the sincerity of your good intentions. But who can presume on the events of war, especially when time presses for instant decision? You are pleased to trust me. Let your Highness extend your confidence thus far: I will take my horse, and ride after the Landamman, if he hath already set forth. I have little doubt to make such an accommodation with him that you may be secure on all your south-eastern frontiers. You may then with security work your will in Lorraine and Provence."

"Do not speak of it," said the Duke, sharply; "thou forget'st thyself and me, when thou supposest that a prince who has pledged his word to his people can recall it like a merchant chaffering for his paltry wares. Go to—we will assist you, but we will be ourselves judge of the time and manner. Yet, having both kind will to our distressed cousin of Anjou and being your good friend, we will not linger in the matter. Our host have orders to break up this evening and direct their march against Neufchatel, where these proud Swiss shall have a taste of the fire and sword which they have provoked."

Oxford sighed deeply, but made no farther remonstrance, in which he acted wisely, since it was likely to have exasperated the fiery temper of the sovereign to whom it was addressed, while it was certain that it would not in the slightest degree alter his resolution.

He took farewell of the Duke, and returned to Colvin, whom he found immersed in the business of his department, and preparing for the removal of the artillery—an operation which the clumsiness of the ordnance and the execrable state of the roads rendered at that time a much more troublesome operation than at present, though it is even still one of the most laborious movements attending the march of an army. The master of the ordnance welcomed Oxford with much glee, and congratulated himself on the distinguished honor of enjoying his company during the campaign, and acquainted him that, by the especial command of the Duke, he had made fitting preparations for his accommodation, suitable to the disguised character which he meant to maintain, but in every other respect as convenient as a camp could admit of.

CHAPTER XXIX

A mirthful man he was—the snows of age
Fell, but they did not chill him. Gaiety,
Even in life's closing, touch'd his teeming brain
With such wild visions as the setting sun
Raises in front of some hoar glacier
Painting the bleak ice with a thousand hues.

Old Play.

LEAVING the Earl of Oxford in attendance on the stubborn Duke of Burgundy during an expedition which the one represented as a brief excursion, more resembling a hunting-party than a campaign, and which the other considered in a much graver and more perilous light, we return to Arthur de Vere, or the younger Philipson, as he continued to be called, who was conducted by his guide with fidelity and success, but certainly very slowly, upon his journey into Provence.

The state of Lorraine, overrun by the Duke of Burgundy's army, and infested at the same time by different scattered bands, who took the field or held out the castles, as they alleged, for the interest of Count Ferrand de Vaudemont, rendered journeying so dangerous, that it was often necessary to leave the main road and to take circuitous tracks, in order to avoid such unfriendly encounters as travelers might otherwise have met with.

Arthur, taught by sad experience to distrust strange guides, found himself, nevertheless, in this eventful and perilous journey, disposed to rest considerable confidence in his present conductor, Thiebault, a Provençal by birth, intimately acquainted with the roads which they took, and, as far as he could judge, disposed to discharge his office with fidelity. Prudence alike, and the habits which he had acquired in traveling, as well as the character of a merchant which he still sustained, induced him to wave the *morque,* or haughty superiority of a knight and noble towards an inferior personage, especially as he rightly conjectured that free intercourse with this man, whose acquirements seemed of a superior cast, was likely to render him a judge of his opinions and disposition towards him. In return for his

condescension, he obtained a good deal of information concerning the province which he was approaching.

As they drew near the boundaries of Provence, the communication of Thiebault became more fluent and interesting. He could not only tell the name and history of each romantic castle which they passed in their devious and doubtful route, but had at his command the chivalrous history of the noble knights and barons to whom they now pertained, or had belonged in earlier days, and could recount their exploits against the Saracens by repelling their attacks upon Christendom, or their efforts to recover the Holy Sepulcher from pagan hands. In the course of such narrations, Thiebault was led to speak of the troubadours, a race of native poets of Provençal origin, differing widely from the minstrels of Normandy and the adjacent provinces of France, with whose tales of chivalry, as well as the numerous translations of their works into Norman-French and English, Arthur, like most of the noble youth of his country, was intimately acquainted and deeply embued. Thiebault boasted that his grandsire, of humble birth indeed, but of distinguished talent, was one of this gifted race, whose compositions produced so great an effect on the temper and manners of their age and country. It was, however, to be regretted that, inculcating as the prime duty of life a fantastic spirit of gallantry, which sometimes crossed the Platonic bound prescribed to it, the poetry of the troubadours * was too frequently used to soften and seduce the heart and corrupt the principles.

Arthur's attention was called to this peculiarity by Thiebault singing, which he could do with good skill, the history of a troubadour named William Cabestaing, who loved, *par amours*, a noble and beautiful lady, Margaret, the wife of a baron called Raymond de Roussillon. The jealous husband obtained proof of his dishonor, and having put Cabestaing to death by assassination, he took his heart from his bosom, and, causing it to be dressed like that of an animal, ordered it to be served up to his lady ; and when she had eaten of the horrible mess, told her of what her banquet was composed. The lady replied that, since she had been made to partake of food so precious, no coarser morsel should ever after cross her lips. She persisted in her resolution, and thus starved herself to death. The troubadour who celebrated this tragic history had displayed in his composition a good deal of poetic art. Glossing over the error

* See Note 8.

of the lovers as the fault of their destiny, dwelling on their tragical fate with considerable pathos, and finally execrating the blind fury of the husband with the full fervor of poetical indignation, he recorded, with vindictive pleasure, how every bold knight and true lover in the south of France assembled to besiege the baron's castle, stormed it by main force, left not one stone upon another, and put the tyrant himself to an ignominious death. Arthur was interested in the melancholy tale, which even beguiled him of a few tears; but as he thought farther on its purport, he dried his eyes, and said, with some sternness—"Thiebault, sing me no more such lays. I have heard my father say that the readiest mode to corrupt a Christian man is to bestow upon vice the pity and the praise which are due only to virtue. Your Baron of Roussillon is a monster of cruelty; but your unfortunate lovers were not the less guilty. It is by giving fair names to foul actions that those who would start at real vice are led to practise its lessons, under the disguise of virtue."

"I would you knew, signior," answered Thiebault, "that this *Lay of Cabestaing and the Lady Margaret of Roussillon* is reckoned a masterpiece of the joyous science. Fie, sir, you are too young to be so strict a censor of morals. What will you do when your head is gray, if you are thus severe when it is scarcely brown?"

"A head which listens to folly in youth will hardly be honorable in old age," answered Arthur.

Thiebault had no mind to carry the dispute farther.

"It is not for me to contend with your worship. I only think, with every true son of chivalry and song, that a knight without a mistress is like the sky without a star."

"Do I not know that?" answered Arthur; "but yet better remain in darkness than be guided by such false lights as shower down vice and pestilence."

"Nay, it may be your seignorie is right," answered the guide. "It is certain, that even in Provence here we have lost much of our keen judgment on matters of love—its difficulties, its intricacies, and its errors, since the troubadors are no longer regarded as usual and since the High and Noble Parliament of Love * has ceased to hold its sittings."

"But in these latter days," continued the Provençal, "kings, dukes, and sovereigns, instead of being the foremost and most faithful vassals of the court of Cupid, are themselves the slaves of selfishness and love of gain. Instead of

* See Note 9.

winning hearts by breaking lances in the lists, they are breaking the hearts of their impoverished vassals by the most cruel exactions; instead of attempting to deserve the smile and favors of their lady-loves, they are meditating how to steal castles, towns, and provinces from their neighbors. But long life to the good and venerable King René! While he has an acre of land left, his residence will be the resort of valiant knights, whose only aim is praise in arms, of true lovers who are persecuted by fortune, and of high-toned harpers, who know how to celebrate faith and valor."

Arthur, interested in learning something more precise than common fame had taught him on the subject of this prince, easily induced the talkative Provençal to enlarge upon the virtues of his old sovereign's character, as just, joyous, and debonair, a friend to the most noble exercises of the chase and the tilt-yard, and still more so to the joyous science of poetry and music; who gave away more revenue than he received, in largesses to knights-errant and itinerant musicians, with whom his petty court was crowded, as one of the very few in which the ancient hospitality was still maintained.

Such was the picture which Thiebault drew of the last minstrel monarch; and though the eulogium was exaggerated, perhaps the facts were not overcharged.

Born of royal parentage, and with high pretensions, René had at no period of his life been able to match his fortunes to his claims. Of the kingdoms to which he asserted right, nothing remained in his possession but the country of Provence itself, a fair and friendly principality, but diminished by the many claims which France had acquired upon portions of it by advances of money to supply the personal expenses of its master, and by other portions which Burgundy, to whom René had been a prisoner, held in pledge for his ransom. In his youth he engaged in more than one military enterprise, in the hope of attaining some part of the territory of which he was styled sovereign. His courage is not impeached, but fortune did not smile on his military adventures; and he seems at last to have become sensible that the power of admiring and celebrating warlike merit is very different from possessing that quality. In fact, René was a prince of very moderate parts, endowed with a love of the fine arts, which he carried to extremity, and a degree of good-humor which never permitted him to repine at fortune, but rendered its possessor happy, when a prince of keener feelings would have died of despair. This insouciant, light-tempered, gay, and thoughtless disposition conducted René,

free from all the passions which embitter life, and often shorten it, to a hale and mirthful old age. Even domestic losses, which often affect those who are proof against mere reverses of fortune, made no deep impression on the feelings of this cheerful old monarch. Most of his children had died young; René took it not to heart. His daughter Margaret's marriage with the powerful Henry of England was considered a connection much above the fortunes of the King of the Troubadours. But in the issue, instead of René deriving any splendor from the match, he was involved in the misfortunes of his daughter, and repeatedly obliged to impoverish himself to supply her ransom. Perhaps in his private soul the old king did not think these losses so mortifying as the necessity of receiving Margaret into his court and family. On fire when reflecting on the losses she had sustained, mourning over friends slain and kingdoms lost, the proudest and most passionate of princesses was ill suited to dwell with the gayest and best-humored of sovereigns, whose pursuits she contemned, and whose lightness of temper, for finding comfort in such trifles, she could not forgive. The discomfort attached to her presence and vindictive recollections embarrassed the good-humored old monarch, though it was unable to drive him beyond his equanimity.

Another distress pressed him more sorely. Yolande, a daughter of his first wife, Isabella, had succeeded to his claims upon the duchy of Lorraine, and transmitted them to her son, Ferrand Count of Vaudemont, a young man of courage and spirit, engaged at this time in the apparently desperate undertaking of making his title good against the Duke of Burgundy, who, with little right but great power, was seizing upon and overrunning this rich duchy, which he laid claim to as a male fief. And to conclude, while the aged king on one side beheld his dethroned daughter in hopeless despair, and on the other his disinherited grandson in vain attempting to recover part of their rights, he had the additional misfortune to know that his nephew, Louis of France, and his cousin, the Duke of Burgundy, were secretly contending which should succeed him in that portion of Provence which he still continued to possess, and that it was only jealousy of each other which prevented his being despoiled of this last remnant of his territory. Yet amid all this distress, René feasted and received guests, danced, sung, composed poetry, used the pencil or brush with no small skill, devised and conducted festivals and processions, and studying to promote, as far as possible, the immediate mirth

and good-humor of his subjects, if he could not materially enlarge their more permanent prosperity, was never mentioned by them excepting as *Le bon Roi René*, a distinction conferred on him down to the present day, and due to him certainly by the qualities of his heart, if not by those of his head.

Whilst Arthur was receiving from his guide a full account of the peculiarities of King René, they entered the territories of that merry monarch. It was late in the autumn, and about the period when the south-eastern counties of France rather show to least advantage. The foliage of the olive-tree is then decayed and withered, and as it predominates in the landscape, and resembles the scorched complexion of the soil itself, an ashen and arid hue is given to the whole. Still, however, there were scenes in the hilly and pastoral parts of the country where the quantity of evergreens relieved the eye even in this dead season.

The appearance of the country, in general, had much in it that was peculiar.

The travelers perceived at every turn some marks of the King's singular character. Provence, as the part of Gaul which first received Roman civilization, and as having been still longer the residence of the Grecian colony who founded Marseilles, is more full of the splendid relics of ancient architecture than any other country in Europe, Italy and Greece excepted. The good taste of the King René had dictated some attempts to clear out and restore these memorials of antiquity. Was there a triumphal arch or an ancient temple—huts and hovels were cleared away from its vicinity, and means were used at least to retard the approach of ruin. Was there a marble fountain, which superstition had dedicated to some sequestered naiad—it was surrounded by olives, almond, and orange trees; its cistern was repaired, and taught once more to retain its crystal treasures. The huge amphitheatres and gigantic colonnades experienced the same anxious care, attesting that the noblest specimen of the fine arts found one admirer and preserver in King René, even during the course of those which are termed the dark and barbarous ages.

A change of manners could also be observed in passing from Burgundy to Lorraine, where society relished of German bluntness, into the pastoral country of Provence, where the influence of a fine climate and melodious language, joined to the pursuits of the romantic old monarch, with the universal taste for music and poetry, had introduced a civiliza-

tion of manners which approached to affectation. The shepherd literally marched abroad in the morning, piping his flocks forth to the pasture with some love sonnet, the composition of an amorous troubadour; and his "fleecy care" seemed actually to be under the influence of his music, instead of being ungraciously insensible to its melody, as is the case in colder climates. Arthur observed, too, that the Provençal sheep, instead of being driven before the shepherd, regularly followed him, and did not disperse to feed until the swain, by turning his face around to them, remaining stationary, and executing variations on the air which he was playing, seemed to remind them that it was proper to do so. While in motion, his huge dog, of a species which is trained to face the wolf, and who is respected by the sheep as their guardian, and not feared as their tyrant, followed his master with his ears pricked, like the chief critic and prime judge of the performance, at some tones of which he seldom failed to intimate disapprobation; while the flock, like the generality of an audience, followed in unanimous though silent applause. At the hour of noon, the shepherd had sometimes acquired an augmentation to his audience, in some comely matron or blooming maiden, with whom he had rendezvoused by such a fountain as we have described, and who listened to the husband's or lover's *chalumeau*, or mingled her voice with his in the duets of which the songs of the troubadours have left so many examples. In the cool of the evening, the dance on the village green, or the concert before the hamlet door, the little repast of fruits, cheese, and bread, which the traveler was readily invited to share, gave new charms to the illusion, and seemed in earnest to point out Provence as the Arcadia of France.

But the greatest singularity was, in the eyes of Arthur, the total absence of armed men and soldiers in this peaceful country. In England, no man stirred without his longbow, sword, and buckler. In France, the hind wore armor even when he was betwixt the stilts of his plow. In Germany, you could not look along a mile of highway, but the eye was encountered by clouds of dust, out of which were seen, by fits, waving feathers and flashing armor. Even in Switzerland, the peasant, if he had a journey to make, though but of a mile or two, cared not to travel without his halberd and two-handed sword. But in Provence all seemed quiet and peaceful, as if the music of the land had lulled to sleep all its wrathful passions. Now and then a mounted cavalier might pass them, the harp at

whose saddle-bow, or carried by one of his attendants, attested the character of a troubadour, which was affected by men of all ranks; and then only a short sword on his left thigh, borne for show rather than use, was a necessary and appropriate part of his equipment.

"Peace," said Arthur, as he looked around him, "is an inestimable jewel; but it will be soon snatched from those who are not prepared with heart and hand to defend it."

The sight of the ancient and interesting town of Aix, where King René held his court, dispelled reflections of a general character, and recalled to the young Englishman the peculiar mission on which he was engaged.

He then required to know from the Provençal Thiebault, whether his instructions were to leave him, now that he had successfully attained the end of his journey.

"My instructions," answered Thiebault, "are to remain in Aix, while there is any chance of your seignorie's continuing there, to be of such use to you as you may require, either as a guide or an attendant, and to keep these men in readiness to wait upon you when you have occasion for messengers or guards. With your approbation, I will see them disposed of in fitting quarters, and receive my farther instructions from your seignorie wherever you please to appoint me. I propose this separation, because I understand it is your present pleasure to be private."

"I must go to court," answered Arthur, "without any delay. Wait for me in half an hour by that fountain in the street, which projects into the air such a magnificent pillar of water, surrounded, I would almost swear, by a vapor-like steam, serving as a shroud to the jet which it envelopes."

"The jet is so surrounded," answered the Provençal, "because it is supplied by a hot spring rising from the bowels of the earth, and the touch of frost on this autumn morning makes the vapor more distinguishable than usual. But if it is good King René whom you seek, you will find him at this time walking in his chimney. Do not be afraid of approaching him, for there never was a monarch so easy of access, especially to good-looking strangers like your seignorie."

"But his ushers," said Arthur, "will not admit me into his hall."

"His hall!" repeated Thiebault. "Whose hall?"

"Why, King René's, I apprehend. If he is walking in a chimney, it can only be in that of his hall, and a stately one it must be to give him room for such exercise."

"You mistake my meaning," said the guide, laughing. "What we call King René's chimney is the narrow parapet yonder; it extends between these two towers, has an exposure to the south, and is sheltered in every other direction. Yonder it is his pleasure to walk and enjoy the beams of the sun on such cool mornings as the present. It nurses, he says, his poetical vein. If you approach his promenade he will readily speak to you, unless, indeed, he is in the very act of a poetical composition."

Arthur could not forbear smiling at the thoughts of a king, eighty years of age, broken down with misfortunes and beset with dangers, who yet amused himself with walking on an open parapet, and composing poetry in presence of all such of his loving subjects as chose to look on.

"If you will walk a few steps this way," said Thiebault, "you may see the good king, and judge whether or not you will accost him at present. I will dispose of the people, and await your orders at the fountain in the corso."

Arthur saw no objection to the proposal of his guide, and was not unwilling to have an opportunity of seeing something of the good King René before he was introduced to his presence.

CHAPTER XXX

Ay, this is he who wears the wreath of bays
Wove by Apollo and the Sisters nine,
Which Jove's dread lightning scathes not. He hath doft
The cumbrous helm of steel, and flung aside
The yet more galling diadem of gold;
While, with a leafy circlet round his brows,
He reigns the king of lovers and of poets.

A CAUTIOUS approach to the chimney, that is, the favorite walk of the King, who is described by Shakspeare as bearing

The style of King of Naples,
Of both the Sicilies, and Jerusalem,
Yet not so wealthy as an English yeoman,

gave Arthur the perfect survey of his Majesty in person. He saw an old man, with locks and beard which, in amplitude and whiteness, nearly rivaled those of the envoy from Schwytz, but with a fresh and ruddy color in his cheek, and an eye of great vivacity. His dress was showy to a degree almost inconsistent with his years; and his step, not only firm but full of alertness and vivacity, while occupied in traversing the short and sheltered walk, which he had chosen rather for comfort than for privacy, showed juvenile vigor still animating an aged frame. The old king carried his tablets and a pencil in his hand, seeming totally abstracted in his own thoughts, and indifferent to being observed by several persons from the public street beneath his elevated promenade.

Of these, some, from their dress and manner, seemed themselves troubadours; for they held in their hands rebecks, rotes, small portable harps, and other indications of their profession. Such appeared to be stationary, as if engaged in observing and recording their remarks on the meditations of their prince. Other passengers, bent on their own more serious affairs, looked up to the King as to some one whom they were accustomed to see daily, but never passed without doffing their bonnets, and expressing, by a

suitable obeisance, a respect and affection towards his person which appeared to make up in cordiality of feeling what it wanted in deep and solemn deference.

René, in the meanwhile, was apparently unconscious both of the gaze of such as stood still or the greeting of those who passed on, his mind seeming altogether engrossed with the apparent labor of some arduous task in poetry or music. He walked fast or slow as best suited the progress of composition. At times he stopped to mark hastily down on his tablets something which seemed to occur to him as deserving of preservation ; at other times he dashed out what he had written, and flung down the pencil as if in a sort of despair. On these occasions, the Sibylline leaf was carefully picked up by a beautiful page, his only attendant, who reverently observed the first suitable opportunity of restoring it again to his royal hand. The same youth bore a viol, on which, at a signal from his master, he occasionally struck a few musical notes, to which the old king listened, now with a soothed and satisfied air, now with a discontented and anxious brow. At times his enthusiasm rose so high that he even hopped and skipped, with an activity which his years did not promise ; at other times his motions were extremely slow, and occasionally he stood still, like one wrapped in the deepest and most anxious meditation. When he chanced to look on the group which seemed to watch his motions, and who ventured even to salute him with a murmur of applause, it was only to distinguish them with a friendly and good-humored nod—a salutation with which, likewise, he failed not to reply to the greeting of the occasional passengers, when his earnest attention to his task, whatever it might be, permitted him to observe them.

At length the royal eye lighted upon Arthur, whose attitude of silent observation, and the distinction of his figure, pointed him out as a stranger. René beckoned to his page, who, receiving his master's commands in a whisper, descended from the royal chimney to the broader platform beneath, which was open to general resort. The youth, addressing Arthur with much courtesy, informed him the King desired to speak with him. The young Englishman had no alternative but that of approaching, though pondering much in his own mind how he ought to comport himself towards such a singular specimen of royalty.

When he drew near, King René addressed him in a tone of courtesy not unmingled with dignity, and Arthur's awe in his immediate presence was greater than he himself could

have anticipated from his previous conception of the royal character.

"You are, from your appearance, fair sir," said King René, "a stranger in this country. By what name must we call you, and to what business are we to ascribe the happiness of seeing you at our court?"

Arthur remained a moment silent, and the good old man, imputing it to awe and timidity, proceeded in an encouraging tone.

"Modesty in youth is ever commendable: you are doubtless an acolyte in the noble and joyous science of minstrelsy and music, drawn hither by the willing welcome which we afford to the professors of those arts, in which—praise be to Our Lady and the saints!—we have ourself been deemed a proficient."

"I do not aspire to the honors of a troubadour," answered Arthur.

"I believe you," answered the King, "for your speech smacks of the Northern, or Norman, French, such as is spoken in England and other unrefined nations. But you are a minstrel, perhaps, from these ultramontane parts. Be assured we despise not their efforts; for we have listened, not without pleasure and instruction, to many of their bold and wild romaunts, which, though rude in device and language, and, therefore, far inferior to the regulated poetry of our troubadours, have yet something in their powerful and rough measure which occasionally rouses the heart like the sound of a trumpet."

"I have felt the truth of your Grace's observation, when I have heard the songs of my country," said Arthur; "but I have neither skill nor audacity to imitate what I admire. My latest residence has been in Italy."

"You are perhaps, then, a proficient in painting," said René—"an art which applies itself to the eye as poetry and music do to the ear, and is scarce less in esteem with us. If you are skilful in the art, you have come to a monarch who loves it, and the fair country in which it is practised."

"In simple truth, sire, I am an Englishman, and my hand has been too much welked and hardened by practise of the bow, the lance, and the sword to touch the harp, or even the pencil."

"An Englishman!" said René, obviously relaxing in the warmth of his welcome; "and what brings you here? England and I have long had little friendship together."

"It is even on that account that I am here," said Arthur. "I come to pay my homage to your Grace's daughter, the Princess Margaret of Anjou, whom I and many true Englishmen regard still as our queen, though traitors have usurped her title."

"Alas, good youth," said René, "I must grieve for you, while I respect your loyalty and faith. Had my daughter Margaret been of my mind, she had long since abandoned pretensions which have drowned in seas of blood the noblest and bravest of her adherents."

The King seemed about to say more, but checked himself.

"Go to my palace," he said; "inquire for the seneschal, Hugh de St. Cyr, he will give thee the means of seeing Margaret—that is, if it be her will to see thee. If not, good English youth, return to my palace, and thou shalt have hospitable entertainment; for a king who loves minstrelsy, music, and painting is ever most sensible to the claims of honor, virtue, and loyalty; and I read in thy looks thou art possessed of these qualities, and willingly believe thou mayst, in more quiet times, aspire to share the honors of the joyous science. But if thou has a heart to be touched by the sense of beauty and fair proportion, it will leap within thee at the first sight of my palace, the stately grace of which may be compared to the faultless form of some high-bred dame, or the artful, yet seemingly simple, modulations of such a tune as we have been now composing."

The King seemed disposed to take his instrument and indulge the youth with a rehearsal of the strain he had just arranged; but Arthur at that moment experienced the painful internal feeling of that peculiar species of shame which well-constructed minds feel when they see others express a great assumption of importance, with the confidence that they are exciting admiration, when in fact they are only exposing themselves to ridicule. Arthur, in short, took leave, "in very shame," of the King of Naples, both the Sicilies, and Jerusalem in a manner somewhat more abrupt than ceremony demanded. The King looked after him with some wonder at this want of breeding, which, however, he imputed to his visitor's insular education, and then again began to twangle his viol.

"The old fool!" said Arthur; "his daughter is dethroned, his dominions crumbling to pieces, his family on the eve of becoming extinct, his grandson driven from one lurking-place to another, and expelled from his mother's inheritance, and he can find amusement in these fopperies! I thought him,

with his long white beard, like Nicholas Bonstetten ; but the old Swiss is a Solomon compared with him."

As these and other reflections, highly disparaging to King René, passed through Arthur's mind, he reached the place of rendezvous, and found Thiebault beneath the steaming fountain, forced from one of those hot springs which had been the delight of the Romans from an early period. Thiebault, having assured his master that his retinue, horse and man, were so disposed as to be ready on an instant's call, readily undertook to guide him to King René's palace, which, from its singularity, and indeed its beauty of architecture, deserved the eulogium which the old monarch had bestowed upon it. The front consisted of three towers of Roman architecture, two of them being placed on the angles of the palace, and the third, which served the purpose of a mausoleum, forming a part of the group, though somewhat detached from the other buildings. This last was a structure of beautiful proportions. The lower part of the edifice was square, serving as a sort of pedestal to the upper part, which was circular, and surrounded by columns of massive granite. The other two towers at the angles of the palace were round, and also ornamented with pillars, and with a double row of windows. In front of, and connected with, these Roman remains, to which a date has been assigned as early as the 5th or 6th century, arose the ancient palace of the Counts of Provence, built a century or two later, but where a rich Gothic or Moorish front contrasted, and yet harmonized, with the more regular and massive architecture of the lords of the world. It is not more than thirty or forty years since this very curious remnant of antique art was destroyed, to make room for new public buildings, which have never yet been erected.

Arthur really experienced some sensation of the kind which the old king had prophesied, and stood looking with wonder at the ever-open gate of the palace, into which men of all kinds seemed to enter freely. After looking around for a few minutes, the young Englishman ascended the steps of a noble portico, and asked of a porter, as old and as lazy as a great man's domestic ought to be, for the seneschal named to him by the King. The corpulent janitor, with great politeness, put the stranger under the charge of a page, who ushered him to a chamber, in which he found another aged functionary of higher rank, with a comely face, a clear, composed eye, and a brow which, having never been knit into gravity, intimated that the seneschal of Aix was a pro-

ficient in the philosophy of his royal master. He recognized Arthur the moment he addressed him.

"You speak northern French, fair sir; you have lighter hair and a fairer complexion than the natives of this country; you ask after Queen Margaret—by all these marks I read you English. Her Grace of England is at this moment paying a vow at the monastery of Mont St. Victoire, and if your name be Arthur Philipson, I have commission to forward you to her presence immediately—that is, as soon as you have tasted of the royal provision."

The young man would have remonstrated, but the seneschal left him no leisure.

"Meat and mass," he said, "never hindered work: it is perilous to youth to journey too far on an empty stomach; he himself would take a mouthful with the Queen's guest, and pledge him to boot in a flask of old Hermitage."

The board was covered with an alacrity which showed that hospitality was familiarly exercised in King René's dominions. Pasties, dishes of game, the gallant boar's head, and other delicacies were placed on the table, and the seneschal played the merry host, frequently apologizing (unnecessarily) for showing an indifferent example, as it was his duty to carve before King René, and the good king was never pleased unless he saw him feed lustily as well as carve featly.

"But for you, sir guest, eat freely, since you may not see food again till sunset; for the good queen takes her misfortunes so to heart that sighs are her food, and her tears a bottle of drink, as the Psalmist hath it. But I bethink me you will need steeds for yourself and your equipage to reach Mont St. Victoire, which is seven miles from Aix."

Arthur intimated that he had a guide and horses in attendance, and begged permission to take his adieu. The worthy seneschal, his fair round belly graced with a gold chain, accompanied him to the gate with a step which a gentle fit of the gout had rendered uncertain, but which, he assured Arthur, would vanish before three days' use of the hot springs. Thiebault appeared before the gate, not with the tired steeds from which they had dismounted an hour since, but with fresh palfreys from the stable of the King.

"They are yours from the moment you have put foot in stirrup," said the seneschal: "the good King René never received back as his property a horse which he had lent to a guest; and that is perhaps one reason why his Highness and we of his household must walk often a-foot."

Here the seneschal exchanged greetings with his young

visitor, who rode forth to seek Queen Margaret's place of temporary retirement at the celebrated monastery of St. Victoire. He demanded of his guide in which direction it lay, who pointed with an air of triumph to a mountain three thousand feet and upwards in height, which arose at five or six miles' distance from the town, and which its bold and rocky summit rendered the most distinguished object of the landscape. Thiebault spoke of it with unusual glee and energy, so much so as to lead Arthur to conceive that his trusty squire had not neglected to avail himself of the lavish hospitality of *Le bon Roi René*. Thiebault, however, continued to expatiate on the fame of the mountain and monastery. They derived their name, he said, from a great victory which was gained by a Roman general named Caio Mario, against two large armies of Saracens with ultramontane names (the Teutones probably and Cimbri), in gratitude to Heaven for which victory Caio Mario vowed to build a monastery on the mountain for the service of the Virgin Mary, in honor of whom he had been baptized. With all the importance of a local connoisseur, Thiebault proceeded to prove his general assertion by specific facts.

"Yonder," he said, "was the camp of the Saracens, from which, when the battle was apparently decided, their wives and women rushed, with horrible screams, dishevelled hair, and the gestures of furies, and for a time prevailed in stopping the flight of the men." He pointed out, too, the river for access to which, cut off by the superior generalship of the Romans, the barbarians, whom he called Saracens, hazarded the action, and whose streams they empurpled with their blood. In short, he mentioned many circumstances which showed how accurately tradition will preserve the particulars of ancient events, even whilst forgetting, misstating, and confounding dates and persons.

Perceiving that Arthur lent him a not unwilling ear—for it may be supposed that the education of a youth bred up in the heat of civil wars was not well qualified to criticize his account of the wars of a distant period—the Provençal, when he had exhausted this topic, drew up close to his master's side, and asked, in a suppressed tone, whether he knew, or was desirous of being made acquainted with, the cause of Margaret's having left Aix, to establish herself in the monastery of St. Victoire.

"For the accomplishment of a vow," answered Arthur; "all the world knows it."

"All Aix knows the contrary," said Thiebault; "and I

can tell you the truth, so I were sure it would not offend your seignorie."

"The truth can offend no reasonable man, so it be expressed in the terms of which Queen Margaret must be spoken in the presence of an Englishman."

Thus replied Arthur, willing to receive what information he could gather, and desirous, at the same time, to check the petulance of his attendant.

"I have nothing," replied his follower, "to state in disparagement of the gracious queen, whose only misfortune is that, like her royal father, she has more titles than towns. Besides, I know well that you Englishmen, though you speak wildly of your sovereigns yourselves, will not permit others to fail in respect to them."

"Say on, then," answered Arthur.

"Your seignorie must know, then," said Thiebault, "that the good King René has been much disturbed by the deep melancholy which afflicted Queen Margaret, and has bent himself with all his power to change it into a gayer humor. He made entertainments in public and in private; he assembled minstrels and troubadours, whose music and poetry might have drawn smiles from one on his death-bed. The whole country resounded with mirth and glee, and the gracious queen could not stir abroad in the most private manner, but, before she had gone a hundred paces, she lighted on an ambush, consisting of some pretty pageant, or festivous mummery, composed often by the good king himself, which interrupted her solitude, in purpose of relieving her heavy thoughts with some pleasant pastime. But the Queen's deep melancholy rejected all these modes of dispelling it, and at length she confined herself to her own apartments, and absolutely refused to see even her royal father, because he generally brought into her presence those whose productions he thought likely to soothe her sorrow. Indeed, she seemed to hear the harpers with loathing, and, excepting one wandering Englishman, who sung a rude and melancholy ballad, which threw her into a flood of tears, and to whom she gave a chain of price, she never seemed to look at or be conscious of the presence of any one. And at length, as I have had the honor to tell your seignorie, she refused to see even her royal father unless he came alone; and that he found no heart to do."

"I wonder not at it," said the young man; "by the white swan, I am rather surprised his mummery drove her not to frenzy."

"Something like it indeed took place," said Thiebault; "and I will tell your seignorie how it chanced. You must know that good King René, unwilling to abandon his daughter to the foul fiend of melancholy, bethought him of making a grand effort. You must know further, that the King, powerful in all the craft of troubadours and jongleurs, is held in peculiar esteem for conducting mysteries, and other of those gamesome and delightful sports and processions with which our Holy Church permits her graver ceremonies to be relieved and diversified, to the cheering of the hearts of all true children of religion. It is admitted that no one has ever been able to approach his excellence in the arrangement of the Fête-Dieu; and the tune to which the devils cudgel King Herod, to the great edification of all Christian spectators, is of our good king's royal composition. He hath danced at Tarasconne in the ballet of St. Martha and the Dragon, and was accounted in his own person the only actor competent to present the Tarrasque. His Highness introduced also a new ritual into the consecration of the Boy Bishop, and composed an entire set of grotesque music for the Festival of Asses. In short, his Grace's strength lies in those pleasing and becoming festivities which strew the path of edification with flowers, and send men dancing and singing on their way to Heaven.

"Now the good King René, feeling his own genius for such recreative compositions, resolved to exert it to the utmost, in the hope that he might thereby relieve the melancholy in which his daughter was plunged, and which infected all that approached her. It chanced, some short time since, that the Queen was absent for certain days, I know not where or on what business, but it gave the good king time to make his preparations. So, when his daughter returned, he with much importunity prevailed on her to make part of a religious procession to St. Sauveur, the principal church in Aix. The Queen, innocent of what was intended, decked herself with solemnity, to witness and partake of what she expected would prove a work of grave piety. But no sooner had she appeared on the esplanade in front of the palace than more than an hundred masks, dressed up like Turks, Jews, Saracens, Moors, and I know not whom besides, crowded around to offer her their homage, in the character of the Queen of Sheba; and a grotesque piece of music called them to arrange themselves for a ludicrous ballet, in which they addressed the Queen in the most entertaining manner, and with the most extravagant gestures. The Queen, stunned

with the noise, and affronted with the petulance of this unexpected onset, would have gone back into the palace; but the doors had been shut by the King's order so soon as she set forth, and her retreat in that direction was cut off. Finding herself excluded from the palace, the Queen advanced to the front of the façade, and endeavored by signs and words to appease the hubbub; but the maskers, who had their instructions, only answered with songs, music, and shouts."

"I would," said Arthur, "there had been a score of English yeomen in presence, with their quarter-staves, to teach the bawling villains respect for one that has worn the crown of England!"

"All the noise that was made before was silence and soft music," continued Thiebault, "till that when the good king himself appeared, grotesquely dressed in the character of King Solomon——"

"To whom, of all princes, he has the least resemblance ——" said Arthur.

"With such capers and gesticulations of welcome to the Queen of Sheba as, I am assured by those who saw it, would have brought a dead man alive again, or killed a living man with laughing. Among other properties, he had in his hand a truncheon, somewhat formed like a fool's bauble——"

"A most fit scepter for such a sovereign——" said Arthur.

"Which was headed," continued Thiebault, "by a model of the Jewish Temple, finely gilded and curiously cut in pasteboard. He managed this with the utmost grace, and delighted every spectator by his gaiety and activity, excepting the Queen, who, the more he skipped and capered, seemed to be the more incensed, until, on his approaching her to conduct her to the procession, she seemed roused to a sort of frenzy, struck the truncheon out of his hand, and breaking through the crowd, who felt as if a tigress had leaped amongst them from a showman's cart, rushed into the royal courtyard. Ere the order of the scenic representation, which her violence had interrupted, could be restored, the Queen again issued forth, mounted and attended by two or three English cavaliers of her Majesty's suite. She forced her way through the crowd, without regarding either their safety or her own, flew like a hail-storm along the streets, and never drew bridle till she was as far up this same Mont St. Victoire as the road would permit. She was then received into the convent, and has since remained there; and a vow of penance is the pretext to cover over the quarrel betwixt her and her father."

"How long may it be," said Arthur, "since these things chanced?"

"It is but three days since Queen Margaret left Aix in the manner I have told you. But we are come as far up the mountain as men usually ride. See, yonder is the monastery rising betwixt two huge rocks, which form the very top of Mont St. Victoire. There is no more open ground than is afforded by the cleft, into which the convent of St. Mary of Victory is, as it were, niched; and the access is guarded by the most dangerous precipice. To ascend the mountain, you must keep that narrow path, which, winding and turning among the cliffs, leads at length to the summit of the hill, and the gate of the monastery."

"And what becomes of you and the horses?" said Arthur.

"We will rest," said Thiebault, "in the hospital maintained by the good fathers at the bottom of the mountain, for the accommodation of those who attend on pilgrims; for I promise you the shrine is visited by many who come from afar, and are attended both by man and horse. Care not for me, I shall be first under cover; but there muster yonder in the west some threatening clouds, from which your seignorie may suffer inconvenience, unless you reach the convent in time. I will give you an hour to do the feat, and will say you are as active as a chamois hunter if you reach it within the time."

Arthur looked around him, and did indeed remark a mustering of clouds in the distant west, which threatened soon to change the character of the day, which had hitherto been brilliantly clear, and so serene that the falling of a leaf might have been heard. He therefore turned him to the steep and rocky path which ascended the mountain, sometimes by scaling almost precipitous rocks, and sometimes by reaching their tops by a more circuitous process. It winded through thickets of wild boxwood and other low aromatic shrubs, which afforded some pasture for the mountain goats, but were a bitter annoyance to the traveler who had to press through them. Such obstacles were so frequent, that the full hour allowed by Thiebault had elapsed before he stood on the summit of Mont St. Victoire, and in front of the singular convent of the same name.

We have already said that the crest of the mountain, consisting entirely of one and bare and solid rock, was divided by a cleft or opening into two heads or peaks, between which the convent was built, occupying all the space between them. The front of the building was of the most ancient and somber

cast of the old Gothic, or rather, as it has been termed, the Saxon; and in that respect corresponded with the savage exterior of the naked cliffs, of which the structure seemed to make a part, and by which it was entirely surrounded, excepting a small open space of more level ground, where, at the expense of much toil, and by carrying earth up the hill, from different spots where they could collect it in small quantities, the good fathers had been able to arrange the accommodations of a garden.

A bell summoned a lay-brother, the porter, of this singularly situated monastery, to whom Arthur announced himself as an English merchant, Philipson by name, who came to pay his duty to Queen Margaret. The porter, with much respect, showed the stranger into the convent, and ushered him into a parlor, which, looking towards Aix, commanded an extensive and splendid prospect over the southern and western parts of Provence. This was the direction in which Arthur had approached the mountain from Aix; but the circuitous path by which he had ascended had completely carried him round the hill. The western side of the monastery, to which the parlor looked, commanded the noble view we have mentioned; and a species of balcony, which connecting the two twin crags, at this place not above four or five yards asunder, ran along the front of the building, and appeared to be constructed for the purpose of enjoying it. But on stepping from one of the windows of the parlor upon this battlemented bartizan, Arthur became aware that the wall on which the parapet rested stretched along the edge of a precipice, which sunk sheer down five hundred feet at least from the foundations of the convent. Surprised and startled at finding himself on so giddy a verge, Arthur turned his eyes from the gulf beneath him to admire the distant landscape, partly illumined, with ominous luster, by the now westerly sun. The setting beams showed in dark red splendor a vast variety of hill and dale, champaign and cultivated ground, with towns, churches, and castles, some of which rose from among trees, while others seemed founded on rocky eminences; others again lurked by the side of streams or lakes, to which the heat and draught of the climate naturally attracted them.

The rest of the landscape presented similar objects when the weather was serene, but they were now rendered indistinct, or altogether obliterated, by the sullen shade of the approaching clouds, which gradually spread over great part of the horizon, and threatened altogether to eclipse the sun,

though the lord of the horizon still struggled to maintain his influence, and, like a dying hero, seemed most glorious even in the moment of defeat. Wild sounds, like groans and howls, formed by the wind in the numerous caverns of the rocky mountain, added to the terrors of the scene, and seemed to foretell the fury of some distant storm, though the air in general was even unnaturally calm and breathless. In gazing on this extraordinary scene, Arthur did justice to the monks who had chosen this wild and grotesque situation, from which they could witness nature in her wildest and grandest demonstrations, and compare the nothingness of humanity with her awful convulsions.

So much was Arthur awed by the scene before him, that he had almost forgotten, while gazing from the bartizan, the important business which had brought him to this place, when it was suddenly recalled by finding himself in the presence of Margaret of Anjou, who, not seeing him in the parlor of reception, had stept upon the balcony, that she might meet with him the sooner.

The Queen's dress was black, without any ornament except a gold coronal of an inch in breadth, restraining her long black tresses, of which advancing years, and misfortunes, had partly altered the hue. There was placed within the circlet a black plume with a red rose, the last of the season, which the good father who kept the garden had presented to her that morning, as the badge of her husband's house. Care, fatigue, and sorrow seemed to dwell on her brow and her features. To another messenger, she would in all probability have administered a sharp rebuke for not being alert in his duty to receive her as she entered; but Arthur's age and appearance corresponded with that of her loved and lost son. He was the son of a lady whom Margaret had loved with almost sisterly affection, and the presence of Arthur continued to excite in the dethroned queen the same feelings of maternal tenderness which had been awakened on their first meeting in the cathedral of Strasburg. She raised him as he kneeled at her feet, spoke to him with much kindness, and encouraged him to detail at full length his father's message, and such other news as his brief residence at Dijon had made him acquainted with.

She demanded which way Duke Charles had moved with his army.

"As I was given to understand by the master of his artillery," said Arthur, "towards the Lake of Neufchatel, on which side he proposes his first attack on the Swiss."

"The headstrong fool!" said Queen Margaret, "he resembles the poor lunatic who went to the summit of the mountain that he might meet the rain half-way. Does thy father, then," continued Margaret, "advise me to give up the last remains of the extensive territories once the dominions of our royal house, and for some thousand crowns, and the paltry aid of a few hundred lances, to relinquish what is left of our patrimony to our proud and selfish kinsman of Burgundy, who extends his claim to our all, and affords so little help, or even promise of help, in return?"

"I should have ill discharged my father's commission," said Arthur, "if I had left your Highness to think that he recommends so great a sacrifice. He feels most deeply the Duke of Burgundy's grasping desire of dominion. Nevertheless, he thinks that Provence must, on King René's death, or sooner, fall either to the share of Duke Charles or to Louis of France, whatever opposition your Highness may make to such a destination; and it may be that my father, as a knight and a soldier, hopes much from obtaining the means to make another attempt on Britain. But the decision must rest with your Highness."

"Young man," said the Queen, "the contemplation of a question so doubtful almost deprives me of reason."

As she spoke, she sunk down as one who needs rest on a stone seat placed on the very verge of the balcony, regardless of the storm, which now began to rise with dreadful gusts of wind, the course of which being intermitted and altered by the crags round which they howled, it seemed as if in very deed Boreas, and Eurus, and Caurus, unchaining the winds from every quarter of heaven, were contending for mastery around the convent of Our Lady of Victory. Amid this tumult, and amid billows of mist which concealed the bottom of the precipice, and masses of clouds which racked fearfully over their heads, the roar of the descending waters rather resembled the fall of cataracts than the rushing of torrents of rain. The seat on which Margaret had placed herself was in a considerable degree sheltered from the storm, but its eddies, varying in every direction, often tossed aloft her disheveled hair; and we cannot describe the appearance of her noble and beautiful, yet ghastly and wasted, features, agitated strongly by anxious hesitation and conflicting thoughts, unless to those of our readers who have had the advantage of having seen our inimitable Siddons in such a character as this. Arthur, confounded by anxiety and terror, could only beseech her Majesty to retire

before the fury of the approaching storm into the interior of the convent.

"No," she replied with firmness; "roofs and walls have ears, and monks, though they have forsworn the world, are not the less curious to know what passes beyond their cells. It is in this place you must hear what I have to say. As a soldier you should scorn a blast of wind or a shower of rain; and to me, who have often held counsel amidst the sound of trumpets and clash of arms, prompt for instant fight, the war of elements is an unnoticed trifle. I tell thee, young Arthur Vere, as I would to your father—as I would to my son—if indeed Heaven had left such a blessing to a wretch forlorn——"

She paused, and then proceeded.

"I tell thee, as I would have told my beloved Edward, that Margaret, whose resolutions were once firm and immovable as these rocks among which we are placed, is now doubtful and variable as the clouds which are drifting around us. I told your father, in the joy of meeting once more a subject of such inappreciable loyalty, of the sacrifices I would make to assure the assistance of Charles of Burgundy to so gallant an undertaking as that proposed to him by the faithful Oxford. But since I saw him I have had cause of deep reflection. I met my aged father only to offend, and, I say it with shame, to insult, the old man in presence of his people. Our tempers are as opposed as the sunshine, which a short space since gilded a serene and beautiful landscape, differs from the tempests which are now wasting it. I spurned with open scorn and contempt what he, in his mistaken affection, had devised for means of consolation, and, disgusted with the idle follies which he had devised for curing the melancholy of a dethroned queen, a widowed spouse, and, alas! a childless mother, I retired hither from the noisy and idle mirth, which was the bitterest aggravation of my sorrows. Such and so gentle is René's temper, that even my unfilial conduct will not diminish my influence over him; and if your father had announced that the Duke of Burgundy, like a knight and a sovereign, had cordially and nobly entered into the plan of the faithful Oxford, I could have found it in my heart to obtain the cession of territory his cold and ambitious policy requires, in order to ensure the assistance which he now postpones to afford till he has gratified his own haughty humor by settling needless quarrels with his unoffending neighbors. Since I have been here, and calmness and solitude have given me time to reflect, I have thought on the offenses I have

given the old man, and on the wrongs I was about to do him. My father, let me do him justice, is also the father of his people. They have dwelt under their vines and fig-trees, in ignoble ease, perhaps, but free from oppression and exaction, and their happiness has been that of their good king. Must I change all this? Must I aid in turning over these contented people to a fierce, headlong, arbitrary prince? May I not break even the easy and thoughtless heart of my poor old father, should I succeed in urging him to do so? These are questions which I shudder even to ask myself. On the other hand, to disappoint the toils, the venturous hopes of your father, to forego the only opportunity which may ever again offer itself of revenge on the bloody traitors of York, and restoration of the house of Lancaster! Arthur, the scene around us is not so convulsed by the fearful tempest and the driving clouds as my mind is by doubt and uncertainty."

"Alas," replied Arthur, "I am too young and inexperienced to be your Majesty's adviser in a case so arduous. I would my father had been in presence himself."

"I know what he would have said," replied the Queen; "but knowing all, I despair of aid from human counselors. I have sought others, but they also are deaf to my entreaties. Yes, Arthur, Margaret's misfortunes have rendered her superstitious. Know, that beneath these rocks, and under the foundation of this convent, there runs a cavern, entering by a secret and defended passage a little to the westward of the summit, and running through the mountain, having an opening to the south, from which, as from this bartizan, you can view the landscape so lately seen from this balcony, or the strife of winds and confusion of clouds which we now behold. In the middle of this cavernous thoroughfare is a natural pit, or perforation, of great but unknown depth. A stone dropped into it is heard to dash from side to side, until the noise of its descent, thundering from cliff to cliff, dies away in distant and faint tinkling, less loud than that of a sheep's bell at a mile's distance. The common people, in their jargon, called this fearful gulf Lou Garagoule; and the traditions of the monastery annex wild and fearful recollections to a place in itself sufficiently terrible. Oracles, it is said spoke from thence in pagan days, by subterranean voices, arising from the abyss; and from these the Roman general is said to have heard, in strange and uncouth rhymes, promises of the victory which gives name to this mountain. These oracles, it is averred, may be yet consulted after performance of strange rites, in which heathen ceremonies are mixed with

Christian acts of devotion. The abbots of Mont St. Victoire have denounced the consultation of Lou Garagoule, and the spirits who reside there, to be criminal. But as the sin may be expiated by presents to the church, by masses, and penances, the door is sometimes opened by the complaisant fathers to those whose daring curiosity leads them, at all risks, and by whatever means, to search into futurity. Arthur, I have made the experiment, and am even now returned from the gloomy cavern, in which, according to the traditional ritual, I have spent six hours by the margin of the gulf, a place so dismal, that after its horrors even this tempestuous scene is refreshing."

The Queen stopped, and Arthur, the more struck with the wild tale that it reminded him of his place of imprisonment at La Ferette, asked anxiously if her inquiries had obtained any answer.

"None whatever," replied the unhappy princess. "The demons of Garagoule, if there be such, are deaf to the suit of an unfortunate wretch like me, to whom neither friends nor fiends will afford counsel or assistance. It is my father's circumstances which prevent my instant and strong resolution. Were my own claims on this piping and paltry nation of troubadours alone interested, I could, for the chance of once more setting my foot in Merry England, as easily and willingly resign them and their paltry coronet as I commit to the storm this idle emblem of the royal rank which I have lost."

As Margaret spoke, she tore from her hair the sable feather and rose which the tempest had detached from the circlet in which they were placed, and tossed them from the battlement with a gesture of wild energy. They were instantly whirled off in a bickering eddy of the agitated clouds, which swept the feather far distant into empty space, through which the eye could not pursue it. But while that of Arthur involuntarily strove to follow its course, a contrary gust of wind caught the red rose and drove it back against his breast, so that it was easy for him to catch hold of and retain it.

"Joy—joy, and good fortune, royal mistress!" he said, returning to her the emblematic flower: "the tempest brings back the badge of Lancaster to its proper owner."

"I accept the omen," said Margaret; "but it concerns yourself, noble youth, and not me. The feather, which is borne away to waste and desolation, is Margaret's emblem. My eyes will never see the restoration of the line of Lan-

caster. But you will live to behold it, and to aid to achieve it, and to dye our red rose deeper yet in the blood of tyrants and traitors. My thoughts are so strangely poised, that a feather or a flower may turn the scale. But my head is still giddy and my heart sick. To-morrow you shall see another Margaret, and till then adieu."

It was time to retire, for the tempest began to be mingled with fiercer showers of rain. When they re-entered the parlor, the Queen clapped her hands, and two female attendants entered.

"Let the father abbot know," she said, "that it is our desire that this young gentleman receive for this night such hospitality as befits an esteemed friend of ours. Till to-morrow, young sir, farewell."

With a countenance which betrayed not the late emotion of her mind, and with a stately courtesy that would have become her when she graced the halls of Windsor, she extended her hand, which the youth saluted respectfully. After her leaving the parlor, the abbot entered, and in his attention to Arthur's entertainment and accommodation for the evening showed his anxiety to meet and obey Queen Margaret's wishes.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Want you a man
Experienced in the world and its affairs?
Here he is for your purpose. He's a monk.
He hath forsworn the world and all its worth,
The rather that he knows it passing well,
Special the worse of it, for he's a monk.

Old Play.

WHILE the dawn of the morning was yet gray, Arthur was awakened by a loud ringing at the gate of the monastery, and presently afterwards the porter entered the cell which had been alloted to him for his lodgings, to tell him that, if his name was Arthur Philipson, a brother of their order had brought him despatches from his father. The youth started up, hastily attired himself, and was introduced in the parlor to a Carmelite monk, being of the same order with the community of St. Victoire.

"I have ridden many a mile, young man, to present you with this letter," said the monk, "having undertaken to your father that it should be delivered without delay. I came to Aix last night during the storm, and learning at the palace that you had ridden hither, I mounted as soon as the tempest abated, and here I am."

"I am beholden to you, father," said the youth, "and if I could repay your pains with a small donative to your convent——"

"By no means," answered the good father; "I took my personal trouble out of friendship to your father, and mine own errand led me this way. The expenses of my long journey have been amply provided for. But open your packet, I can answer your questions at leisure."

The young man accordingly stepped into an embrasure of the window, and read as follows:—

"SON ARTHUR—Touching the state of the country, in so far as concerns the safety of traveling, know that the same is precarious. The Duke hath taken the towns of Brie and Granson, and put to death five hundred men whom he made

prisoners in garrison there. But the Confederates are approaching with a large force, and God will judge for the right. Howsoever the game may go, these are sharp wars, in which little quarter is spoken of on either side, and therefore there is no safety for men of our profession till something decisive shall happen. In the mean time, you may assure the widowed lady that our correspondent continues well disposed to purchase the property which she has in hand; but will scarce be able to pay the price till his present pressing affairs shall be settled, which I hope will be in time to permit us to embark the funds in the profitable adventure I told our friend of. I have employed a friar, traveling to Provence, to carry this letter, which I trust will come safe. The bearer may be trusted.

"Your affectionate father,

"JOHN PHILIPSON.

Arthur easily comprehended the latter part of the epistle, and rejoiced he had received it at so critical moment. He questioned the Carmelite on the amount of the Duke's army, which the monk stated to amount to sixty thousand men, while he said the Confederates, though making every exertion, had not yet been able to assemble the third part of that number. The young Ferrand de Vaudemont was with their army, and had received, it was thought, some secret assistance from France; but as he was little known in arms, and had few followers, the empty title of general which he bore added little to the strength of the Confederates. Upon the whole, he reported that every chance appeared to be in favor of Charles, and Arthur, who looked upon his success as presenting the only chance in favor of his father's enterprise, was not a little pleased to find it ensured, as far as depended on a great superiority of force. He had no leisure to make farther inquiries, for the Queen at that moment entered the apartment, and the Carmelite, learning her quality withdrew from her presence in deep reverence.

The paleness of her complexion still bespoke the fatigues of the day preceding; but as she graciously bestowed on Arthur the greetings of the morning, her voice was firm, her eye clear, and her countenance steady. "I meet you," she said, "not as I left you, but determined in my purpose. I am satisfied that, if René does not voluntarily yield up his throne of Provence, by some step like that which we proposed, he will be hurled from it by violence, in which, it may be, his life will not be spared. We will therefore, to

work with all speed. The worst is that I cannot leave this convent till I have made the necessary penances for having visited the Garagoule, without performing which I were no Christian woman. When you return to Aix, inquire at the palace for my secretary, with whom this line will give you credence. I have, even before this door of hope opened to me, endeavored to form an estimate of King René's situation, and collected the documents for that purpose. Tell him to send me, duly sealed and under fitting charge, the small cabinet hooped with silver. Hours of penance for past errors may be employed to prevent others ; and, from the contents of that cabinet, I shall learn whether I am, in this weighty matter, sacrificing my father's interests to my own half-desperate hopes. But of this I have little or no doubt. I can cause the deeds of resignation and transference to be drawn up here under my own direction, and arrange the execution of them when I return to Aix, which shall be the first moment after my penance is concluded."

"And this letter, gracious madam," said Arthur, "will inform you what events are approaching, and of what importance it may be to take time by the forelock. Place me but in possession of these momentous deeds, and I will travel night and day till I reach the Duke's camp. I shall find him most likely in the moment of victory, and with his heart too much open to refuse a boon to the royal kinswoman who is surrendering to him all. We will, we must in such an hour obtain princely succors ; and we shall soon see if the licentious Edward of York, the savage Richard, the treacherous and perjured Clarence, are hereafter to be lords of Merry England, or whether they must give place to a more rightful sovereign and better man. But O ! royal madam, all depends on haste."

"True ; yet a few days may, nay, must, cast the die between Charles and his opponents ; and, ere making so great a surrender, it were as well to be assured that he whom we would propitiate is in capacity to assist us. All the events of a tragic and varied life have led me to see there is no such thing as an inconsiderable enemy. I will make haste, however, trusting in the interim we may have good news from the banks of the lake at Neufchatel."

"But who shall be employed to draw these most important deeds ?" said the young man.

Margaret mused ere she replied—"The father guardian is complaisant, and I think faithful ; but I would not willingly repose confidence in one of the Provençal monks. Stay, let

me think; your father says the Carmelite who brought the letter may be trusted—he shall do the turn. He is a stranger, and will be silent for a piece of money. Farewell, Arthur de Vere. You will be treated with all hospitality by my father. If thou dost receive farther tidings, thou wilt let me know them; or, should I have instructions to send, thou wilt hear from me. So, *benedicite*."

Arthur proceeded to wind down the mountain at a much quicker pace than he had ascended on the day before. The weather was now gloriously serene, and the beauties of vegetation, in a country where it never totally slumbers, were at once delicious and refreshing. His thoughts wandered from the crags of Mont St. Victoire to the cliff of the canton of Unterwalden, and fancy recalled the moments when his walks through such scenery were not solitary, but when there was a form by his side whose simple beauty was engraved on his memory. Such thoughts were of a preoccupying nature, and I grieve to say that they entirely drowned the recollection of the mysterious caution given him by his father, intimating that Arthur might not be able to comprehend such letters as he should receive from him till they were warmed before a fire.

The first thing which reminded him of this singular caution was the seeing a chafing-dish of charcoal in the kitchen of the hostelry at the bottom of the mountain, where he found Thiebault and his horses. This was the first fire which he had seen since receiving his father's letter, and it reminded him not unnaturally of what the Earl had recommended. Great was his surprise to see that, after exposing the paper to the fire as if to dry it, a word emerged in an important passage of the letter, and the concluding words now read—"The bearer may *not* be trusted." Well-nigh choked with shame and vexation, Arthur could think of no other remedy than instantly to return to the convent and acquaint the Queen with this discovery, which he hoped still to convey to her in time to prevent any risk being incurred by the Carmelite's treachery.

Incensed at himself, and eager to redeem his fault, he bent his manly breast against the steep hill, which was probably never scaled in so short time as by the young heir of De Vere; for, within forty minutes from his commencing the ascent, he stood breathless and panting in the presence of Queen Margaret, who was alike surprised at his appearance and his exhausted condition.

"Trust not the Carmelite!" he exclaimed. "You are

betrayed, noble Queen, and it is by my negligence. Here is my dagger ; bid me strike it into my heart !"

Margaret demanded and obtained a more special explanation, and when it was given, she said, "It is an unhappy chance ; but your father's instructions ought to have been more distinct. I have told yonder Carmelite the purpose of the contracts, and engaged with him to draw them. He has but now left me to serve at the choir. Tnere is no withdrawing the confidence I have unhappily placed ; but I can easily prevail with the father guardian to prevent the monk from leaving the convent till we are indifferent to his secrecy. It is our best chance to secure it, and we will take care that what inconvenience he sustains by his detention shall be well recompensed. Meanwhile, rest thou, good Arthur, and undo the throat of thy mantle. Poor youth, thou art wellnigh exhausted with thy haste."

Arthur obeyed, and sat down on a seat in the parlor ; for the speed which he had exerted rendered him almost incapable of standing.

"If I could but see," he said, "the false monk, I would find a way to charm him to secrecy !"

"Better leave him to me," said the Queen ; "and in a word, I forbid you to meddle with him. The coif can treat better with the cowl than the casque can do. Say no more of him. I joy to see you wear around your neck the holy relic I bestowed on you ; but what Moorish charmlet is that you wear beside it ? Alas ! I need not ask. Your heightened color, almost as deep as when you entered a quarter of an hour hence [since], confesses a true-love token. Alas ! poor boy, hast thou not only such a share of thy country's woes to bear, but also thine own load of affliction, not the less poignant now that future time will show thee how fantastic it is ? Margaret of Anjou could once have aided wherever thy affections were placed ; but now she can only contribute to the misery of her friends, not to their happiness. But this lady of the charm, Arthur, is she fair—is she wise and virtuous—is she of noble birth—and does she love ?" She perused his countenance with the glance of an eagle, and continued, "To all thou wouldst answer 'Yes,' if shamefacedness permitted thee. Love her then in turn, my gallant boy, for love is the parent of brave actions. Go, my noble youth ; high-born and loyal, valorous and virtuous, enamored and youthful, to what mayst thou not rise ? The chivalry of ancient Europe only lives in a bosom like thine. Go and let the praises of a queen fire thy bosom with

the love of honor and achievement. In three days we meet at Aix."

Arthur, highly gratified with the Queen's condescension, once more left her presence.

Returning down the mountain with a speed very different from that which he had used in the ascent, he again found his Provençal squire, who had remained in much surprise at witnessing the confusion in which his master had left the inn, almost immediately after he had entered it without any apparent haste or agitation. Arthur explained his hasty return by alleging he had forgot his purse at the convent. "Nay, in that case," said Thiebault, "considering what you left and where you left it, I do not wonder at your speed, though, Our Lady save me, as I never saw living creature, save a goat with a wolf at his heels, make his way over crag and briers with half such rapidity as you did."

They reached Aix after about an hour's riding, and Arthur lost no time in waiting upon the good King René, who gave him a kind reception, both in respect of the letter from the Duke of Burgundy and in consideration of his being an Englishman, the avowed subject of the unfortunate Margaret. The placable monarch soon forgave his young guest the want of complaisance with which he had eschewed to listen to his compositions; and Arthur speedily found that to apologize for his want of breeding in that particular was likely to lead to a great deal more rehearsing than he could find patience to tolerate. He could only avoid the old king's extreme desire to recite his own poems and perform his own music by engaging him in speaking of his daughter Margaret. Arthur had been sometimes induced to doubt the influence which the Queen boasted herself to possess over her aged father; but, on being acquainted with him personally, he became convinced that her powerful understanding and violent passions inspired the feeble-minded and passive king with a mixture of pride, affection, and fear, which united to give her the most ample authority over him.

Although she had parted with him but a day or two since, and in a manner so ungracious on her side, René was as much overjoyed at hearing of the probability of her speedy return as the fondest father could have been at the prospect of being reunited to the most dutiful child, whom he had not seen for years. The old king was impatient as a boy for the day of her arrival, and, still strangely unenlightened on the difference of her taste from his own, he was with difficulty

induced to lay aside a project of meeting her in the character of old Palemon—

The prince of shepherds, and their pride—

at the head of an Arcadian procession of nymphs and swains, to inspire whose choral dances and songs every pipe and tambourine in the country was to be placed in requisition. Even the old seneschal, however, intimated his disapprobation of this species of *joyeuse entrée ;* so that René suffered himself at length to be persuaded that the Queen was too much occupied by the religious impressions to which she had been of late exposed to receive any agreeable sensation from sights or sounds of levity. The King gave way to reasons which he could not sympathize with ; and thus Margaret escaped the shock of welcome, which would perhaps have driven her in her impatience back to the mountain of St. Victoire, and the sable cavern of Lou Garagoule.

During the time of her absence, the days of the court of Provence were employed in sports and rejoicings of every description—tilting at the barrier with blunted spears, riding at the ring, parties for hare-hunting and falconry, frequented by the youth of both sexes, in the company of whom the King delighted, while the evenings were consumed in dancing and music.

Arthur could not but be sensible that not long since all this would have made him perfectly happy ; but the last months of his existence had developed his understanding and passions. He was now initiated in the actual business of human life, and looked on its amusements with an air of something like contempt ; so that among the young and gay noblesse who composed this merry court he acquired the title of the youthful philosopher, which was not bestowed upon him, it may be supposed, as inferring anything of peculiar compliment.

On the fourth day news were received, by an express messenger, that Queen Margaret would enter Aix before the hour of noon, to resume her residence in her father's palace. The good King René seemed, as it drew nigh, to fear the interview with his daughter as much as he had previously desired it, and contrived to make all around him partake of his fidgety anxiety. He tormented his steward and cooks to recollect what dishes they had ever observed her to taste of with approbation ; he pressed the musicians to remember the tunes which she approved, and when one of them boldly

replied he had never known her Majesty endure any strain with patience, the old monarch threatened to turn him out of his service for slandering the taste of his daughter. The banquet was ordered to be served at half-past eleven, as if accelerating it would have had the least effect upon hurrying the arrival of the expected guests; and the old king, with his napkin over his arm, traversed the hall from window to window, wearying every one with questions whether they saw anything of the Queen of England. Exactly as the bells tolled noon, the Queen, with a very small retinue, chiefly English, and in mourning habits like herself, rode into the town of Aix. King René, at the head of his court, failed not to descend from the front of his stately palace and move along the street to meet his daughter. Lofty, proud, and jealous of incurring ridicule, Margaret was not pleased with this public greeting in the market-place. But she was desirous at present to make amends for her late petulance, and therefore she descended from her palfrey; and although something shocked at seeing René equipped with a napkin, she humbled herself to bend the knee to him, asking at once his blessing and forgiveness.

"Thou hast—thou hast my blessing, my suffering dove," said the simple king to the proudest and most impatient princess that ever wept for a lost crown. "And for thy pardon, how canst thou ask it, who never didst me an offense since God made me father to so gracious a child? Rise—I say rise; may, it is for me to ask thy pardon. True, I said in my ignorance, and thought within myself, that my heart had indited a goodly thing; but it vexed thee. It is therefore for me to crave pardon." And down sunk good King René upon both knees; and the people, who are usually captivated with anything resembling the trick of the scene, applauded with much noise, and some smothered laughter, a situation in which the royal daughter and her parent seemed about to rehearse the scene of the Roman Charity.

Margaret, sensitively alive to shame, and fully aware that her present position was sufficiently ludicrous in its publicity at least, signed sharply to Arthur, whom she saw in the King's suite, to come to her; and, using his arm to rise, she muttered to him aside, and in English—"To what saint shall I vow myself, that I may preserve patience when I so much need it?"

"For pity's sake, royal madam, recall your firmness of mind and composure," whispered her esquire, who felt at the moment more embarrassed than honored by his distinguished

office, for he could feel that the Queen actually trembled with vexation and impatience.

They at length resumed their route to the palace, the father and daughter arm in arm—a posture most agreeable to Margaret, who could bring herself to endure her father's effusions of tenderness, and the general tone of his conversation, so that he was not overheard by others. In the same manner, she bore with laudable patience the teasing attentions which he addressed to her at table, noticed some of his particular courtiers, inquired after others, led the way to his favorite subjects of conversation on poetry, painting, and music, till the good king was as much delighted with the unwonted civilities of his daughter as ever was lover with the favorable confessions of his mistress, when, after years of warm courtship, the ice of her bosom is at length thawed. It cost the haughty Margaret an effort to bend herself to play this part. Her pride rebuked her for stooping to flatter her father's foibles in order to bring him over to the resignation of his dominions; yet, having undertaken to do so, and so much having been already hazarded upon this sole remaining chance of success in an attack upon England, she saw, or was willing to see, no alternative.

Betwixt the banquet and the ball by which it was to be followed, the Queen sought an opportunity of speaking to Arthur.

"Bad news, my sage counselor," she said. "The Carmelite never returned to the convent after the service was over. Having learned that you had come back in great haste, he had, I suppose, concluded he might stand in suspicion, so he left the convent of Mont St. Victoire."

"We must hasten the measures which your Majesty has resolved to adopt," answered Arthur.

"I will speak with my father to-morrow. Meanwhile, you must enjoy the pleasures of the evening, for to you they may be pleasures. Young lady of Boisgelin, I give you this cavalier to be your partner for the evening."

The black-eyed and pretty Provençale courtesied with due decorum, and glanced at the handsome young Englishman with an eye of approbation; but, whether afraid of his character as a philosopher or his doubtful rank, added the saving clause—"If my mother approves."

"Your mother, damsel, will scarce, I think, disapprove of any partner whom you receive from the hands of Margaret of Anjou. Happy privilege of youth," she added with a sigh, as the youthful couple went off to take their place in

the *bransle*, "which can snatch a flower even on the roughest road!"

Arthur acquitted himself so well during the evening, that perhaps the young countess was only sorry that so gay and handsome a gallant limited his compliments and attentions within the cold bounds of that courtesy enjoined by the rules of ceremony.

CHAPTER XXXII

For I have given here my full consent,
To undeck the pompous body of a king,
Make glory base, and sovereignty a slave,
Proud Majesty a subject, state a peasant.
Richard II.

THE next day opened a grave scene. King René had not forgotten to arrange the pleasures of the day, when, to his horror and discomfiture, Margaret demanded an interview upon serious business. If there was a proposition in the world which René from his soul detested, it was any that related to the very name of business.

"What was it that his child wanted?" he said. "Was it money? He would give her whatever ready sums he had, though he owned his exchequer was somewhat bare; yet he had received his income for the season. It was ten thousand crowns. How much should he desire to be paid to her—the half, three parts, or the whole? All was at her command."

"Alas, my dear father," said Margaret, "it is not my affairs, but your own, on which I desire to speak with you."

"If the affairs are mine," said René, "I am surely master to put them off to another day—to some rainy, dull day, fit for no better purpose. See, my love, the hawking-party are all on their steeds and ready, the horses are neighing and pawing, the gallants and maidens mounted, and ready with hawk on fist, the spaniels struggling in the leash. It were a sin, with wind and weather to friend, to lose so lovely a morning."

"Let them ride their way," said Queen Margaret, "and find their sport; for the matter I have to speak concerning involves honor and rank, life and means of living."

"Nay, but I have to hear and judge between Calezon and John of Acqua Mortis, the two most celebrated troubadours."

"Postpone their cause till to-morrow," said Margaret, "and dedicate an hour or two to more important affairs."

"If you are peremptory," replied King René, "you are aware, my child, I cannot say you nay."

And with reluctance he gave orders for the hawkers to go

on and follow their sport, as he could not attend them that day.

The old king then suffered himself, like an unwilling greyhound withheld from the chase, to be led into a separate apartment. To insure privacy, Margaret stationed her secretary Mordaunt, with Arthur, in an ante-chamber, giving them orders to prevent all intrusion.

"Nay, for myself, Margaret," said the good-natured old man, "since it must be, I consent to be put *au secret;* but why keep old Mordaunt from taking a walk in this beautiful morning, and why prevent young Arthur from going forth with the rest? I promise you, though they term him a philosopher, yet he showed as light a pair of heels last night with the young Countess de Boisgelin, as any gallant in Provence."

"They are come from a country," said Margaret, "in which men are trained from infancy to prefer their duty to their pleasure."

The poor king, led into the council-closet, saw with internal shuddering the fatal cabinet of ebony, bound with silver, which had never been opened but to overwhelm him with weariness, and dolefully calculated how many yawns he must strangle ere he sustained the consideration of its contents. They proved, however, when laid before him, of a kind that excited even his interest, though painfully.

His daughter presented him with a short and clear view of the debts which were secured on his dominions, and for which they were mortgaged in various pieces and parcels. She then showed him, by another schedule, the large claims of which payment was instantly demanded, to discharge which no funds could be found or assigned. The King defended himself like others in his forlorn situation. To every claim of six, seven, or eight thousand ducats, he replied by the assertion that he had ten thousand crowns in his chancery, and showed some reluctance to be convinced, till repeatedly urged upon him, that the same sum could not be adequate to the discharge of thirty times the amount.

"Then," said the King, somewhat impatiently, "why not pay off those who are most pressing, and let the others wait till the receipts come round?"

"It is a practise which has been too often resorted to," replied the Queen, "and it is but a part of honesty to pay creditors who have advanced their all in your Grace's service."

"But are we not," said René, "king of both the Sicilies,

Naples, Arragon, and Jerusalem? And why is the monarch of such fair kingdoms to be pushed to the wall, like a bankrupt yeoman, for a few bags of paltry crowns?"

"You are indeed monarch of these kingdoms," said Margaret; "but is it necessary to remind your Majesty that it is but as I am Queen of England, in which I have not an acre of land, and cannot command a penny of revenue? You have no dominions which are a source of revenue, save those which you see in this scroll, with an exact list of the income they afford. It is totally inadequate, you see, to maintain your state and to pay the large engagements incurred to former creditors."

"It is cruel to press me to the wall thus," said the poor king. "What can I do? If I am poor, I cannot help it. I am sure I would pay the debts you talk of, if I knew the way."

"Royal father, I will show it you. Resign your useless and unavailing dignity, which, with the pretensions attending it, serves but to make your miseries ridiculous. Resign your rights as a sovereign, and the income which cannot be stretched out to the empty excesses of a beggarly court will enable you to enjoy, in ease and opulence, all the pleasures you most delight in as a private baron."

"Margaret, you speak folly," answered René, somewhat sternly. "A king and his people are bound by ties which neither can sever without guilt. My subjects are my flock; I am their shepherd. They are assigned to my governance by Heaven, and I dare not renounce the charge of protecting them."

"Were you in condition to do so," answered the Queen, "Margaret would bid you fight to the death. But don your harness, long disused, mount your war-steed, cry 'René for Provence!' and see if a hundred men will gather round your standard. Your fortresses are in the hands of strangers; army you have none; your vassals may have good-will, but they lack all military skill and soldierlike discipline. You stand but the mere skeleton of monarchy, which France or Burgundy may prostrate on the earth, whichever first puts forth his arm to throw it down."

The tears trickled fast down the old king's cheeks when this unflattering prospect was set before him, and he could not forbear owning his total want of power to defend himself and his dominions, and admitting that he had often thought of the necessity of compounding for his resignation with one of his powerful neighbors.

"It was thy interest, Margaret, harsh and severe as you are, which prevented my entering, before now, into measures most painful to my feelings, but perhaps best calculated for my advantage. But I had hoped it would hold on for my day; and thou, my child, with the talents Heaven has given thee, wouldst, I thought, have found remedy for distresses which I cannot escape otherwise than by shunning the thoughts of them."

"If it is in earnest you speak of my interest," said Margaret, "know, that your resigning Provence will satisfy the nearest, and almost the only, wish that my bosom can form; but, so judge me Heaven, as it is on your account, gracious sire, as well as mine, that I advise your compliance."

"Say no more on't, child; give me the parchment of resignation and I will sign it. I see thou hast it ready drawn; let us sign it, and then we will overtake the hawkers. We must suffer wo, but there is little need to sit down and weep for it."

"Do you not ask," said Margaret, surprised at his apathy, "to whom you cede your dominions?"

"What boots it," answered the King, "since they must be no more my own? It must be either to Charles of Burgundy or my nephew Louis—both powerful and politic princes. God send my poor people may have no cause to wish their old man back again, whose only pleasure was to see them happy and mirthful."

"It is to Burgundy you resign Provence," said Margaret.

"I would have preferred him," answered René: "he is fierce, but not malignant. One word more—are my subjects' privileges and immunities fully secured?"

"Amply," replied the Queen; "and your own wants of all kinds honorably provided for. I would not leave the stipulations in your favor in blank, though I might perhaps have trusted Charles of Burgundy where money alone is concerned."

"I ask not for myself; with my viol and my pencil, René the troubadour will be as happy as ever was René the king."

So saying, with practical philosophy he whistled the burden of his last composed ariette, and signed away the rest of his royal possessions without pulling off his glove or even reading the instrument.

"What is this?" he said, looking at another and separate parchment of much briefer contents. "Must my kinsman Charles have both the Sicilies, Catalonia, Naples, and Jeru-

salem, as well as the poor remainder of Provence ? Methinks, in decency, some greater extent of parchment should have been allowed to so ample a cession."

"That deed," said Margaret, "only disowns and relinquishes all countenance of Ferrand de Vaudemont's rash attempt on Lorraine, and renounces all quarrel on that account against Charles of Burgundy."

For once Margaret miscalculated the tractability of her father's temper. René positively started, colored, and stammered with passion, as he interrupted her—"*only* disown—*only* relinquish—*only* renounce the cause of my grandchild, the son of my dear Yolande—his rightful claims on his mother's inheritance ! Margaret, I am ashamed for thee. Thy pride is an excuse for thy evil temper ; but what is pride worth which can stoop to commit an act of dishonorable meanness ? To desert, nay, disown, my own flesh and blood. because the youth is a bold knight under shield and disposed to battle for his right—I were worthy that harp and horn rung out shame on me, should I listen to thee."

Margaret was overcome in some measure by the old man's unexpected opposition. She endeavored, however, to show that there was no occasion, in point of honor, why René should engage in the cause of a wild adventurer, whose right, be it good, be it bad, was only upheld by some petty and underhand supplies of money from France, and the countenance of a few of the restless banditti who inhabit the borders of all nations. But, ere René could answer, voices, raised to an unusual pitch, were heard in the ante-chamber, the door of which was flung open by an armed knight, covered with dust, who exhibited all the marks of a long journey.

"Here I am," he said, "father of my mother—behold your grandson—Ferrand de Vaudemont ; the son of your lost Yolande kneels at your feet, and implores a blessing on him and his enterprise."

"Thou hast it," replied René, "and may it prosper with thee, gallant youth, image of thy sainted mother—my blessings, my prayers, my hopes, go with you !"

"And you, fair aunt of England," said the young knight, addressing Margaret—"you who are yourself dispossessed by traitors, will you not own the cause of a kinsman who is struggling for his inheritance ?"

"I wish all good to your person, fair nephew," answered the Queen of England, "although your features are strange to me. But to advise this old man to adopt your cause,

when it is desperate in the eyes of all wise men, were impious madness."

"Is my cause, then, so desperate?" said Ferrand; forgive me if I was not aware of it. And does my aunt Margaret say this, whose strength of mind supported Lancaster so long, after the spirits of her warriors had been quelled by defeat? What—forgive me, for my cause must be pleaded—what would you have said had my mother Yolande been capable to advise her father to disown your own Edward, had God permitted him to reach Provence in safety?"

"Edward," said Margaret, weeping as she spoke, "was incapable of desiring his friends to espouse a quarrel that was irremediable. His, too, was a cause for which mighty princes and peers laid lance in rest."

"Yet Heaven blessed it not——" said Vaudemont.

"Thine," continued Margaret, "is but embraced by the robber nobles of Germany, the upstart burghers of the Rhine cities, the paltry and clownish confederates of the cantons."

"But Heaven *has blessed it*," replied Vaudemont. "Know, proud woman, that I come to interrupt your treacherous intrigues—no petty adventurer, subsisting and maintaining warfare by sleight rather than force, but a conqueror from a bloody field of battle, in which Heaven has tamed the pride of the tyrant of Burgundy."

"It is false!" said the Queen, starting. "I believe it not."

"It is true," said De Vaudemont, "as true as Heaven is above us. It is four days since I left the field of Granson, heaped with Burgundy's mercenaries; his wealth, his jewels, his plate, his magnificent decorations, the prize of the poor Swiss, who scarce can tell their value. Know you this, Queen Margaret?" continued the young soldier, showing the well-known jewel which decorated the Duke's order of the Golden Fleece; "think you not the lion was closely hunted when he left such trophies as these behind him?"

Margaret looked with dazzled eyes and bewildered thoughts upon a token which confirmed the Duke's defeat, and the extinction of her last hopes. Her father, on the contrary, was struck with the heroism of the young warrior—a quality which except as it existed in his daughter Margaret, had, he feared, taken leave of his family. Admiring in his heart the youth who exposed himself to danger for the meed of praise almost as much as he did the poets by whom the warrior's fame is rendered immortal, he hugged his grandson to

his bosom, bidding him "gird on his sword in strength," and assuring him, if money could advance his affairs, he, King René, could command ten thousand crowns, any part, or the whole, of which was at Ferrand's command; thus giving proof of what had been said of him, that his head was incapable of containing two ideas at the same time.

We return to Arthur, who, with the Queen of England's secretary, Mordaunt, had been not a little surprised by the entrance of the Count de Vaudemont, calling himself Duke of Lorraine, into the ante-room, in which they kept a kind of guard, followed by a tall strong Swiss, with a huge halberd over his shoulder. The prince naming himself, Arthur did not think it becoming to oppose his entrance to the presence of his grandfather and aunt, especially as it was obvious that his opposition must have created an affray. In the huge staring halberdier, who had sense enough to remain in the ante-room, Arthur was not a little surprised to recognize Sigismund Biederman, who, after staring wildly at him for a moment, like a dog which suddenly recognizes a favorite, rushed up to the young Englishman with a wild cry of gladness, and in hurried accents told him how happy he was to meet with him, and that he had matters of importance to tell him. It was at no time easy for Sigismund to arrange his ideas, and now they were altogether confused by the triumphant joy which he expressed for the recent victory of his countrymen over the Duke of Burgundy; and it was with wonder that Arthur heard his confused and rude, but faithful, tale.

"Look you, King Arthur, the Duke had come up with his huge army as far as Granson, which is near the outlet of the great lake of Neufchatel. There were five or six hundred Confederates in the place, and they held it till provisions failed, and then you know they were forced to give it over. But, though hunger is hard to bear, they had better have borne it a day or two longer, for the butcher Charles hung them all up by the neck, upon trees round the place; and there was no swallowing for them, you know, after such usage as that. Meanwhile, all was busy on our hills, and every man that had a sword or lance accoutered himself with it. We met at Neufchatel, and some Germans joined us with the noble Duke of Lorraine. Ah, King Arthur, there is a leader! we all think him second but to Rudolph of Donnerhugel. You saw him even now—it was he that went into that room; and you saw him before—it is he that was the Blue Knight of Bâle; but we called him Laurenz then,

for Rudolph said his presence among us must not be known to our father, and I did not know myself at that time who he really was. Well, when we came to Neufchatel we were a goodly company: we were fifteen thousand stout Confederates, and of others, Germans and Lorraine men, I will warrant you five thousand more. We heard that the Burgundian was sixty thousand in the field; but we heard, at the same time, that Charles had hung up our brethren like dogs, and the man was not among us—among the Confederates, I mean—who would stay to count heads, when the question was to avenge them. I would you could have heard the roar of fifteen thousand Swiss demanding to be led against the butcher of their brethren! My father himself, who, you know, is usually so eager for peace, now gave the first voice for battle; so, in the gray of the morning, we descended the lake towards Granson, with tears in our eyes and weapons in our hands, determined to have death or vengeance. We came to a sort of strait, between Vauxmoreux and the lake; there were horse on the level ground between the mountain and the lake, and a large body of infantry on the side of the hill. The Duke of Lorraine and his followers engaged the horse, while we climbed the hill to dispossess the infantry. It was with us the affair of a moment. Every man of us was at home among the crags, and Charles's men were stuck among them as thou wert, Arthur, when thou didst first come to Geierstein. But there were no kind maidens to lend them their hands to help them down. No—no, there were pikes, clubs, and halberds, many a one, to dash and thrust them from places where they could hardly keep their feet had there been no one to disturb them. So the horsemen, pushed by the Lorrainers, and seeing us upon their flanks, fled as fast as their horses could carry them. Then we drew together again on a fair field, which is *buon campagna*, as the Italian says, where the hills retire from the lake. But lo you, we had scarce arrayed our ranks, when we heard such a din and clash of instruments, such a trample of their great horses, such a shouting and crying of men, as if all the soldiers, and all the minstrels, in France and Germany, were striving which should make the loudest noise. Then there was a huge cloud of dust approaching us, and we began to see we must do or die, for this was Charles and his whole army come to support his vanguard. A blast from the mountain dispersed the dust, for they had halted to prepare for battle. O, good Arthur, you would have given ten years of life but to have seen the sight! There were thousands of horse all in complete array, glancing against the

sun, and hundreds of knights with crowns of gold and silver on their helments, and thick masses of spears on foot, and cannon, as they call them. I did not know what things they were which they drew on heavily with bullocks and placed before their army, but I knew more of them before the morning was over. Well, we were ordered to draw up in a hollow square, as we are taught at exercise, and before we pushed forwards, we were commanded, as is the godly rule and guise of our warfare, to kneel down and pray to God, Our Lady, and the blessed saints; and we afterwards learned that Charles, in his arrogance, thought we asked for mercy. Ha! ha! ha! a proper jest. If my father once knelt to him, it was for the sake of Christian blood and godly peace; but on the field of battle, Arnold Biederman would not have knelt to him and his whole chivalry, though he had stood alone with his sons on that field. Well, but Charles, supposing we asked grace, was determined to show us that we had asked it at a graceless face, for he cried, 'Fire my cannon on the coward slaves; it is all the mercy they have to expect from me!' Bang—bang—bang—off went the things I told you of, like thunder and lightning; and some mischief they did, but the less that we were kneeling, and the saints doubtless gave the huge balls a hoist over the heads of those who were asking grace from them, but from no mortal creatures. So we had the signal to rise and rush on, and I promise you there were no sluggards. Every man felt ten men's strength. My halberd is no child's toy—if you have forgotten it, there it is—and yet it trembled in my grasp as if it had been a willow wand to drive cows with. On we went, when suddenly the cannon were silent, and the earth shook with another and continued growl and battering, like thunder under ground. It was the men-at-arms rushing to charge us. But our leaders knew their trade, and had seen such a sight before; it was, 'Halt, halt—kneel down in the front—stoop in the second rank—close shoulder to shoulder like brethren—lean all spears forward and receive them like an iron wall!' On they rushed, and there was a rending of lances that would have served the Unterwalden old women with splinters of firewood for a twelvemonth. Down went armed horses—down went accoutered knight—down went banner and bannerman—down went peaked boot and crowned helmet, and of those who fell not a man escaped with life. So they drew off in confusion, and were getting in order to charge again, when the noble Duke Ferrand and his horsemen dashed at them in their own way, and we moved

onward to support him. Thus on we pressed, and the foot hardly waited for us, seeing their cavalry so handled. Then if you had seen the dust and heard the blows! The noise of a hundred thousand thrashers, the flight of the chaff which they drive about, would be but a type of it. On my word, I almost thought it shame to dash about my halberd, the rout was so helplessly piteous. Hundreds were slain unresisting, and the whole army was in complete flight."

"My father—my father!" exclaimed Arthur; "in such a route, what can have become of him?"

"He escaped safely," said the Swiss—"fled with Charles."

"It must have been a bloody field ere he fled," replied the Englishman.

"Nay," answered Sigismund, "he took no part in the fight, but merely remained by Charles; and prisoners said it was well for us, for that he is a man of great counsel and action in the wars. And as to flying, a man in such a matter must go back if he cannot press forward, and there is no shame in it, especially if you be not engaged in your own person."

As he spoke thus, their conversation was interrupted by Mordaunt, with "Hush—hush, the King and Queen come forth."

"What am I to do?" said Sigismund, in some alarm. "I care not for the Duke of Lorraine; but what am I to do when kings and queens enter?"

"Do nothing but rise, unbonnet yourself, and be silent."

Sigismund did as he was directed.

King René came forth arm in arm with his grandson; and Margaret followed, with deep disappointment and vexation on her brow. She signed to Arthur as she passed, and said to him—"Make thyself master of the truth of this most unexpected news, and bring the particulars to me. Mordaunt will introduce thee."

She then cast a look on the young Swiss, and replied courteously to his awkward salutation. The royal party then left the room, René bent on carrying his grandson to the sporting-party, which had been interrupted, and Margaret to seek the solitude of her private apartment, and await the confirmation of what she regarded as evil tidings.

They were no sooner passed, than Sigismund observed—"And so that is a king and queen! *Peste!* the King looks somewhat like old Jacomo, the violer, that used to scrape on the fiddle to us when he came to Geierstein in his rounds.

But the Queen is a stately creature. The chief cow of the herd, who carries the bouquets and garlands, and leads the rest to the chalet, has not a statelier pace. And how deftly you approached her and spoke to her! I could not have done it with so much grace. But it is like that you have served apprentice to the court trade?"

"Leave that for the present, good Sigismund," answered Arthur, "and tell me more of this battle."

"By St. Mary, but I must have some victuals and drink first," said Sigismund, "if your credit in this fine place reaches so far."

"Doubt it not, Sigismund," said Arthur; and, by the intervention of Mordaunt, he easily procured, in a more retired apartment, a collation and wine, to which the young Biederman did great honor, smacking his lips with much gusto after the delicious wines, to which, in spite of his father's ascetic precepts, his palate was beginning to be considerably formed and habituated. When he found himself alone with a flask of *côté rôti* and a biscuit, and his friend Arthur, he was easily led to continue his tale of conquest.

"Well—where was I? Oh, where we broke their infantry—well—they never rallied, and fell into greater confusion at every step—and we might have slaughtered one half of them, had we not stopped to examine Charles's camp. Mercy on us, Arthur, what a sight was there! Every pavilion was full of rich clothes, splendid armor, and great dishes and flagons, which some men said were of silver; but I knew there was not so much silver in the world, and was sure they must be of pewter, rarely burnished. Here there were hosts of laced lackeys, and grooms, and pages, and as many attendants as there were soldiers in the army; and thousands, for what I knew, of pretty maidens. By the same token, both menials and maidens placed themselves at the disposal of the victors; but I promise you that my father was right severe on any who would abuse the rights of war. But some of our young men did not mind him, till he taught them obedience with the staff of his halberd. Well, Arthur, there was fine plundering, for the Germans and French that were with us rifled everything, and some of our men followed the example—it is very catching. So I got into Charles's own pavilion, where Rudolph and some of his people were trying to keep out every one, that he might have the spoiling of it himself, I think; but neither he nor any Bernese of them all dared lay truncheon over my pate; so I entered, and saw them putting piles of pewter-trenchers, so clean as to look

like silver, into chests and trunks. I pressed through them into the inner place, and there was Charles's pallet-bed—I I will do him justice, it was the only hard one in his camp —and there were fine sparkling stones and pebbles lying about among gauntlets, boots, vambraces, and such-like gear. So I thought of your father and you, and looked for something, when what should I see but my old friend here (here he drew Queen Margaret's necklace from his bosom), which I knew, because you remember I recovered it from the *scharfgerichter* at Brisach. 'Oho! you pretty sparklers,' said I, 'you shall be Burgundian no longer, but go back to my honest English friends,' and therefore——"

"It is of immense value," said Arthur, "and belongs not to my father or to me, but to the queen you saw but now."

"And she will become it rarely," answered Sigismund. "Were she but a score, or a score and a half, years younger, she were a gallant wife for a Swiss landholder. I would warrant her to keep his household in high order."

"She will reward thee liberally for recovering her property," said Arthur, scarce suppressing a smile at the idea of the proud Margaret becoming the housewife of a Swiss shepherd.

"How—reward!" said the Swiss. "Bethink thee I am Sigismund Biederman, the son of the Landamman of Unterwalden. I am not a base lanzknecht, to be paid for courtesy with piastres. Let her grant me a kind word of thanks, or the matter of a kiss, and I am well contented."

"A kiss of her hand, perhaps," said Arthur, again smiling at his friend's simplicity.

"Umph, the hand! Well, it may do for a queen of some fifty years and odd, but would be poor homage to a Queen of May."

Arthur here brought back the youth to the subject of his battle, and learned that the slaughter of the Duke's forces in the flight had been in no degree equal to the importance of the action.

"Many rode off on horseback," said Sigismund; "and our German *reiters* flew on the spoil, when they should have followed the chase. And besides, to speak the truth, Charles's camp delayed our very selves in the pursuit; but had we gone half a mile further, and seen our friends hanging on trees, not a Confederate would have stopped from the chase while he had limbs to carry him in pursuit."

"And what has become of the Duke?"

"Charles has retreated into Burgundy, like a boar who

has felt the touch of the spear, and is more enraged than hurt; but is, they say, sad and sulky. Others report that he has collected all his scattered army, and immense forces besides, and has screwed his subjects to give him money, so that we may expect another brush. But all Switzerland will join us after such a victory."

"And my father is with him?" said Arthur.

"Truly he is, and has in a right godly manner tried to set afoot a treaty of peace with my own father. But it will scarce succeed. Charles is as mad as ever; and our people are right proud of our victory, and so they well may. Nevertheless, my father forever preaches that such victories, and such heaps of wealth, will change our ancient manners, and that the plowman will leave his labor to turn soldier. He says much about it; but why money, choice meat and wine, and fine clothing should do so much harm, I cannot bring my poor brains to see. And many better heads than mine are as much puzzled. Here's to you, friend Arthur. This is choice liquor."

"And what brings you and your general, Prince Ferrand, post to Nancy [Aix]?" said the young Englishman.

"Faith, you are yourself the cause of our journey."

"I the cause?" said Arthur. "Why, how could that be?"

"Why, it is said you and Queen Margaret are urging this old fiddling King René to yield up his territories to Charles, and to disown Ferrand in his claim upon Lorraine. And the Duke of Lorraine sent a man that you know well—that is, you do not know *him*, but you know some of his family, and he knows more of you than you wot—to put a spoke in your wheel, and prevent your getting for Charles the county of Provence, or preventing Ferrand being troubled or traversed in his natural rights over Lorraine."

"On my word, Sigismund, I cannot comprehend you," said Arthur.

"Well," replied the Swiss, "my lot is a hard one. All our house say that I can comprehend nothing, and I shall be next told that nobody can comprehend me. Well, in plain language, I mean my uncle, Count Albert, as he calls himself, of Geierstein—my father's brother."

"Anne of Geierstein's father!" echoed Arthur.

"Ay, truly; I thought we should find some mark to make you know him by."

"But I never saw him."

"Ay, but you have though. An able man he is, and

knows more of every man's business than the man does himself. Oh! it was not for nothing that he married the daughter of a salamander!"

"Pshaw, Sigismund, how can you believe that nonsense?" answered Arthur.

"Rudolph told me you were as much bewildered as I was that night at Graffslust," answered the Swiss.

"If I were so, I was the greater ass for my pains," answered Arthur.

"Well, but this uncle of mine has got some of the old conjuring books from the library at Arnheim, and they say he can pass from place to place with more than mortal speed; and that he is helped in his designs by mightier counselors than mere men. Always, however, though so able and highly endowed, his gifts, whether coming from a lawful or unlawful quarter, bring him no abiding advantage. He is eternally plunged into strife and danger."

"I know few particulars of his life," said Arthur, disguising as much as he could his anxiety to hear more of him; "but I have heard that he left Switzerland to join the Emperor."

"True," answered the young Swiss, "and married the young Baroness of Arnheim; but afterwards he incurred my namesake's imperial displeasure, and not less that of the Duke of Austria. They say you cannot live in Rome and strive with the Pope; so my uncle thought it best to cross the Rhine, and betake himself to Charles's court, who willingly received noblemen from all countries, so that they had good sounding names, with the title of count, marquis, baron, or such-like, to march in front of them. So my uncle was most kindly received; but within this year or two all this friendship has been broken up. Uncle Albert obtained a great lead in some mysterious societies, of which Charles disapproved, and set so hard at my poor uncle, that he was fain to take orders and shave his hair, rather than lose his head. But, though he cut off his hair, his brain remains as busy as ever; and although the Duke suffered him to beat large, yet he found him so often in his way, that all men believed he waited but an excuse for seizing upon him and putting him to death. But my uncle persists that he fears not Charles; and that, duke as he is, Charles has more occasion to be afraid of him. And so you saw how boldly be played his part at La Ferette."

"By St. George of Windsor," exclaimed Arthur, "the black priest of St. Paul's!"

"Oh ho! you understand me now. Well, he took it upon him that Charles would not dare to punish him for his share in De Hagenbach's death; and no more did he, although uncle Albert sat and voted in the Estates of Burgundy, and stirred them up all he could to refuse giving Charles the money he asked of them. But when the Swiss war broke out, uncle Albert became assured his being a clergyman would be no longer his protection, and that the Duke intended to have him accused of corresponding with his brother and countrymen; and so he appeared suddenly in Ferrand's camp at Neufchatel, and sent a message to Charles that he renounced his allegiance, and bid him defiance."

"A singular story of an active and versatile man," said the young Englishman.

"Oh, you may seek the world for a man like uncle Albert. Then he knows everything; and he told Duke Ferrand what you were about here, and offered to go and bring more certain information; ay, though he left the Swiss camp but five or six days before the battle, and the distance between Arles * and Neufchatel be four hundred miles complete, yet he met him on his return, when Duke Ferrand, with me to show him the way, was hastening hitherward, having set off from the very field of battle."

"Met him!" said Arthur. "Met whom? Met the black priest of St. Paul's?"

"Ay, I mean so," replied Sigismund; "but he was habited as a Carmelite monk."

"A Carmelite!" said Arthur, a sudden light flashing on him; "and I was so blind as to recommend his services to the Queen! I remember well that he kept his face much concealed in his cowl; and I, foolish beast, to fall so grossly into the snare! And yet perhaps it is as well the transaction was interrupted, since I fear, if carried successfully through, all must have been disconcerted by this astounding defeat."

Their conversation had thus far proceeded, when Mordaunt, appearing, summoned Arthur to his royal mistress's apartment. In that gay palace, a gloomy room, whose windows looked upon some part of the ruins of the Roman edifice, but excluded every other object, save broken walls and tottering columns, was the retreat which Margaret had chosen for her own. She received Albert [Arthur] with a

* [Should be Aix; the true distance from Neufchatel to Aix is about two hundred and fifty miles.]

kindness more touching that it was the inmate of so proud and fiery a disposition—of a heart assailed with many woes, and feeling them severely.

"Alas, poor Arthur!" she said, "thy life begins where thy father's threatens to end, in useless labor to save a sinking vessel. The rushing leak pours in its waters faster than human force can lighten or discharge. All—all goes wrong when our unhappy cause becomes connected with it. Strength becomes weakness, wisdom folly, and valor cowardice. The Duke of Burgundy, hitherto victorious in all his bold undertakings, has but to entertain the momentary thought of yielding succor to Lancaster, and behold his sword is broken by a peasant's flail; and his disciplined army, held to be the finest in the world, flies like chaff before the wind; while their spoils are divided by renegade German hirelings and barbarous Alpine shepherds! What more hast thou learned of this strange tale?"

"Little, madam, but what you have heard. The worst additions are, that the battle was shamefully cowardlike, and completely lost, with every advantage to have won it; the best, that the Burgundian army has been rather dispersed than destroyed, and that the Duke himself has escaped, and is rallying his forces in Upper Burgundy."

"To sustain a new defeat, or engage in a protracted and doubtful contest, fatal to his reputation as defeat itself. Where is thy father?"

"With the Duke, madam, as I have been informed," replied Arthur.

"Hie to him, and say I charge him to look after his own safety, and care no farther for my interests. This last blow has sunk me: I am without an ally, without a friend, without treasure——"

"Not so, madam," replied Arthur. "One piece of good fortune has brought back to your Grace this inestimable relic of your fortunes." And producing the precious necklace, he gave the history of its recovery.

"I rejoice at the chance which has restored these diamonds," said the Queen, "that in point of gratitude, at least, I may not be utterly bankrupt. Carry them to your father; tell him my schemes are over, and my heart, which so long clung to hope, is broken at last. Tell him the trinkets are his own, and to his own use let him apply them. They will but poorly repay the noble earldom of Oxford, lost in the cause of her who sends them."

"Royal madam," said the youth, "be assured my father

would sooner live by service as a *schwarzreiter* than become a burden on your misfortunes."

"He never yet disobeyed command of mine," said Margaret; "and this is the last I will lay upon him. If he is too rich or too proud to benefit by his queen's behest, he will find enough of poor Lancastrians who have fewer means or fewer scruples."

"There is yet a circumstance I have to communicate," said Arthur, and recounted the history of Albert of Geierstein, and the disguise of a Carmelite monk.

"Are you such a fool," answered the Queen, "as to suppose this man has any supernatural powers to aid him in his ambitious projects and his hasty journeys?"

"No, madam; but it is whispered that the Count Albert of Geierstein, or this black priest of St. Paul's, is a chief amongst the secret societies of Germany, which even princes dread whilst they hate them; for the man that can command a hundred daggers must be feared even by those who rule thousands of swords."

"Can this person," said the Queen, "being now a churchman, retain authority amongst those who deal in life and death? It is contrary to the canons."

"It would seem so, royal madam; but everything in these dark institutions differs from what is practised in the light of day. Prelates are often heads of a Vehmique bench, and the Archbishop of Cologne exercises the dreadful office of their chief, as Duke of Westphalia, the principal region in which these societies flourish.* Such privileges attach to the secret influence of the chiefs of this dark association as may well seem supernatural to those who are unapprised of circumstances of which men shun to speak in plain terms."

"Let him be wizard or assassin," said the Queen, "I thank him for having contributed to interrupt my plan of the old man's cession of Provence, which, as events stand, would have stripped René of his dominions, without furthering our plan of invading England. Once more, be stirring with the dawn, and bend thy way back to thy father, and charge him to care for himself and think no more of me. Bretagne, where the heir of Lancaster resides, will be the safest place of refuge for its bravest followers. Along the Rhine, the Invisible Tribunal, it would seem, haunts both shores, and to be innocent of ill is no security; even here the proposed treaty with Burgundy may take air, and the

*See Head of the Vehmic Tribunals. Note 10.

Provençaux carry daggers as well as crooks and pipes. But I hear the horses fast returning from the hawking-party, and the silly old man, forgetting all the eventful proceedings of the day, whistling as he ascends the steps. Well, we will soon part, and my removal will be, I think, a relief to him. Prepare for banquet and ball, for noise and nonsense—above all, to bid adieu to Aix with morning dawn."

Thus dismissed from the Queen's presence, Arthur's first care was to summon Thiebault to have all things in readiness for his departure; his next to prepare himself for the pleasures of the evening, not perhaps so heavily affected by the failure of his negotiation as to be incapable of consolation in such a scene; for the truth was, that his mind secretly revolted at the thoughts of the simple old king being despoiled of his dominions to further an invasion of England, in which, whatever interest he might have in his daughter's rights, there was little chance of success.

If such feelings were censurable, they had their punishment. Although few knew how completely the arrival of the Duke of Lorraine, and the intelligence he brought with him, had disconcerted the plans of Queen Margaret, it was well known there had been little love betwixt the Queen and his mother Yolande; and the young prince found himself at the head of a numerous party in the court of his grandfather, who disliked his aunt's haughty manners, and were wearied by the unceasing melancholy of her looks and conversation, and her undisguised contempt of the frivolities which passed around her. Ferrand, besides, was young, handsome, a victor just arrived from a field of battle, fought gloriously, and gained against all chances to the contrary. That he was a general favorite, and excluded Arthur Philipson, as an adherent of the unpopular Queen, from the notice her influence had on a former evening procured him, was only a natural consequence of their relative condition. But what somewhat hurt Arthur's feelings was to see his friend Sigismund the Simple, as his brethren called him, shining with the reflected glory of the Duke Ferrand of Lorraine, who introduced to all the ladies present the gallant young Swiss as Count Sigismund of Geierstein. His care had procured for his follower a dress rather more suitable for such a scene than the country attire of the count, otherwise Sigismund Biederman.

For a certain time, whatever of novelty is introduced into society is pleasing, though it has nothing else to recommend it. The Swiss were little known personally out of their own

country, but they were much talked of; it was a recommendation to be of that country. Sigismund's manners were blunt—a mixture of awkwardness and rudeness, which was termed frankness during the moment of his favor. He spoke bad French and worse Italian; it gave naïveté to all he said. His limbs were too bulky to be elegant; his dancing, for Count Sigismund failed not to dance, was the bounding and gamboling of a young elephant; yet they were preferred to the handsome proportions and courtly movements of the youthful Englishman, even by the black-eyed countess, in whose good graces Arthur had made some progress on the preceding evening. Arthur, thus thrown into the shade, felt as Mr. Pepys afterwards did when he tore his camlet cloak: the damage was not great, but it troubled him.

Nevertheless, the passing evening brought him some revenge. There are some works of art the defects of which are not seen till they are injudiciously placed in too strong a light, and such was the case with Sigismund the Simple. The quick-witted though fantastic Provençaux soon found out the heaviness of his intellect and the extent of his good-nature, and amused themselves at his expense by ironical compliments and well-veiled raillery. It is probable they would have been less delicate on the subject had not the Swiss brought into the dancing-room along with him his eternal halberd, the size, and weight, and thickness of which boded little good to any one whom the owner might detect in the act of making merry at his expense. But Sigismund did no further mischief that night, except that, in achieving a superb *entrechat*, he alighted with his whole weight on the miniature foot of his pretty partner, which he wellnigh crushed to pieces.

Arthur had hitherto avoided looking towards Queen Margaret during the course of the evening, lest he should disturb her thoughts from the channel in which they were rolling, by seeming to lay a claim on her protection. But there was something so whimsical in the awkward physiognomy of the maladroit Swiss, that he could not help glancing an eye to the alcove where the Queen's chair of state was placed, to see if she observed him. The very first view was such as to rivet his attention. Margaret's head was reclined on the chair, her eyes scarcely open, her features drawn up and pinched, her hands closed with effort. The English lady of honor who stood behind her, old, deaf, and dim-sighted, had not discovered anything in her mistress's

position more than the abstracted and indifferent attitude with which the Queen was wont to be present in body and absent in mind during the festivities of the Provençal court. But when Arthur, greatly alarmed, came behind the seat to press her attention to her mistress, she exclaimed, after a minute's investigation, "Mother of Heaven, the Queen is dead!" And it was so. It seemed that the last fiber of life in that fiery and ambitious mind had, as she herself prophesied, given way at the same time with the last thread of political hope.

CHAPTER XXXIII

Toll, toll the bell!
Greatness is o'er,
The heart has broke,
To ache no more;
An unsubstantial pageant all!
Drop o'er the scene the funeral pall.
Old Poem.

THE commotion and shrieks of fear and amazement which were excited among the ladies of the court by an event so singular and shocking had begun to abate, and the sighs, more serious though less intrusive, of the few English attendants of the deceased queen began to be heard, together with the groans of old King René, whose emotions were as acute as they were short-lived. The leeches had held a busy but unavailing consultation, and the body that was once a queen's was delivered to the priest of St. Sauveur, that beautiful church in which the spoils of pagan temples have contributed to fill up the magnificence of the Christian edifice. The stately pile was duly lighted up, and the funeral provided with such splendor as Aix could supply. The Queen's papers being examined, it was found that Margaret, by disposing of jewels and living at small expense, had realized the means of making a decent provision for life for her very few English attendants. Her diamond necklace, described in her last will as in the hands of an English merchant named John Philipson, or his son, or the price thereof, if by them sold or pledged, she left to the said John Philipson and his son Arthur Philipson, with a view to the prosecution of the design which they had been destined to advance, or, if that should prove impossible, to their own use and profit. The charge of her funeral rites was wholly entrusted to Arthur, called Philipson, with a request that they should be conducted entirely after the forms observed in England. This trust was expressed in an addition to her will, signed the very day on which she died.

Arthur lost no time in despatching Thiebault express to his father with a letter, explaining, in such terms as he knew would be understood, the tenor of all that happened

since he came to Aix, and above all, the death of Queen Margaret.

Finally, he requested directions for his motions, since the necessary delay occupied by the obsequies of a person of such eminent rank must detain him at Aix till he should receive them.

The old king sustained the shock of his daughter's death so easily, that on the second day after the event he was engaged in arranging a pompous procession for the funeral, and composing an elegy, to be sung to a tune also of his own composing, in honor of the deceased queen, who was likened to the goddesses of heathen mythology, and to Judith, Deborah, and all the other holy women, not to mention the saints of the Christian dispensation. It cannot be concealed that, when the first burst of grief was over, King René could not help feeling that Margaret's death cut a political knot which he might have otherwise found it difficult to untie, and permitted him to take open part with his grandson, so far indeed as to afford him a considerable share of the contents of the Provençal treasury, which amounted to no larger sum than ten thousand crowns. Ferrand, having received the blessing of his grandfather in a form which his affairs rendered most important to him, returned to the resolutes whom he commanded; and with him, after a most loving farewell to Arthur, went the stout but simple minded young Swiss, Sigismund Biederman.

The little court of Aix were left to their mourning. King René, for whom ceremonial and show, whether of a joyful or melancholy character, was always matter of importance, would willingly have bestowed on solemnizing the obsequies of his daughter Margaret what remained of his revenue, but was prevented from doing so, partly by remonstrances from his ministers, partly by the obstacles opposed by the young Englishman, who, acting upon the presumed will of the dead, interfered to prevent any such fantastic exhibitions being produced at the obsequies of the Queen as had disgusted her during her life.

The funeral, therefore, after many days had been spent in public prayers and acts of devotion, was solemnized with the mournful magnificence due to the birth of the deceased, and with which the Church of Rome so well knows how to affect at once the eye, ear, and feelings.

Amid the various nobles who assisted on the solemn occasion, there was one who arrived just as the tolling of the great bells of St. Sauveur had announced that the procession

was already on its way to the cathedral. The stranger hastily exchanged his traveling-dress for a suit of deep mourning, which was made after the fashion proper to England. So attired, he repaired to the cathedral, where the noble mien of the cavalier imposed such respects on the attendants, that he was permitted to approach close to the side of the bier; and it was across the coffin of the queen for whom he had acted and suffered so much that the gallant Earl of Oxford exchanged a melancholy glance with his son. The assistants, especially the English servants of Margaret, gazed on them both with respect and wonder, and the elder cavalier, in particular, seemed to them no unapt representative of the faithful subjects of England, paying their last duty at the tomb of her who had so long swayed the scepter, if not faultlessly, yet always with a bold and resolved hand.

The last sound of the solemn dirge had died away, and almost all the funeral attendants had retired, when the father and son still lingered in mournful silence beside the remains of their sovereign. The clergy at length approached and intimated they were about to conclude the last duties, by removing the body which had been lately occupied and animated by so haughty and restless a spirit to the dust, darkness, and silence of the vault, where the long-descended Counts of Provence awaited dissolution. Six priests raised the bier on their shoulders, others bore huge waxen torches before and behind the body, as they carried it down a private staircase which yawned in the floor to admit their descent. The last notes of the requiem, in which the churchmen joined, had died away along the high and fretted arches of the cathedral, the last flash of light which arose from the mouth of the vault had glimmered and disappeared, when the Earl of Oxford, taking his son by the arm, led him in silence forth into a small cloistered court behind the building, where they found themselves alone. They were silent for a few miuutes, for both, and particularly the father, were deeply affected. At length the Earl spoke.

"And this, then, is her end," said he. "Here, royal lady, all that we have planned and pledged life upon falls to pieces with thy dissolution! The heart of resolution, the head of policy is gone; and what avails it that the limbs of the enterprise still have motion and life? Alas, Margaret of Anjou! may Heaven reward thy virtues, and absolve thee from the consequence of thine errors! Both belonged to thy station, and if thou didst hoist too high a sail in prosperity, never lived there princess who defied more proudly the storms

of adversity, or bore up against them with such dauntless nobility of determination. With this event the drama has closed, and our parts, my son, are ended."

"We bear arms, then, against the infidels, my lord?" said Arthur, with a sigh that was, however, hardly audible.

"Not," answered the Earl, "until I learn that Henry of Richmond, the undoubted heir of the house of Lancaster, has no occasion for my services. In these jewels of which you wrote me, so strangely lost and recovered, I may be able to supply him with resources more needful than either your services or mine. But I return no more to the camp of the Duke of Burgundy; for in him there is no help."

"Can it be possible that the power of so great a sovereign has been overthrown in one fatal battle?" said Arthur.

"By no means," replied his father. "The loss at Granson was very great; but to the strength of Burgundy it is but a scratch on the shoulders of a giant. It is the spirit of Charles himself his wisdom, at least, and his foresight, which have given way under the mortification of a defeat by such as he accounted inconsiderable enemies, and expected to have trampled down with a few squadrons of his men-at-arms. Then his temper is become forward, peevish, and arbitrary, devoted to those who flatter and, as there is too much reason to believe, betray him, and suspicious of those counselors who give him wholesome advice. Even I have had my share of distrust. Thou knowest I refused to bear arms against our late hosts the Swiss, and he saw in that no reason for rejecting my attendance on his march. But since the defeat of Granson, I have observed a strong and sudden change, owing, perhaps, in some degree to the insinuations of Campo-basso, and not a little to the injured pride of the Duke, who was unwilling that an indifferent person in my situation, and thinking as I do, should witness the disgrace of his arms. He spoke in my hearing of lukewarm friends, cold-blooded neutrals—of those who, not being with him, must be against him. I tell thee, Arthur de Vere, the Duke has said that which touched my honor so nearly, that nothing but the commands of Queen Margaret and the interests of the house of Lancaster could have made me remain in his camp. That is over. My royal mistress has no more occasion for my poor services; the Duke can spare no aid to our cause, and if he could, we can no longer dispose of the only bribe which might have induced him to afford us succors. The power of seconding his views on Provence is buried with Margaret of Anjou."

"What, then, is your purpose?" demanded his son.

"I propose," said Oxford, "to wait at the court of King René until I can hear from the Earl of Richmond, as we must still call him. I am aware that banished men are rarely welcome at the court of a foreign prince; but I have been the faithful follower of his daughter Margaret. I only propose to reside in disguise, and desire neither notice nor maintenance; so methinks King René will not refuse to permit me to breathe the air of his dominions, until I learn in what direction fortune or duty shall call me."

"Be assured he will not," answered Arthur. "René is incapable of a base or ignoble thought; and if he could despise trifles as he detests dishonor, he might be ranked high in the list of monarchs."

This resolution being adopted, the son presented his father at King René's court, whom he privately made acquainted that he was a man of quality, and a distinguished Lancastrian. The good king would in his heart have preferred a guest of lighter accomplishments and gayer temper to Oxford, a statesman and a soldier of melancholy and grave habits. The Earl was conscious of this, and seldom troubled his benevolent and lighthearted host with his presence. He had, however, an opportunity of rendering the old king a favor of peculiar value. This was in conducting an important treaty betwixt René and Louis XI. of France, his nephew. Upon that crafty monarch René finally settled his principality; for the necessity of extricating his affairs by such a measure was now apparent even to himself, every thought of favoring Charles of Burgundy in the arrangement having died with Queen Margaret. The policy and wisdom of the English earl, who was entrusted with almost the sole charge of this secret and delicate measure, were of the utmost advantage to good King René, who was freed from personal and pecuniary vexations, and enabled to go piping and taboring to his grave. Louis did not fail to propitiate the plenipotentiary, by throwing out distant hopes of aid to the efforts of the Lancastrian party in England. A faint and insecure negotiation was entered into upon the subject; and these affairs, which rendered two journeys to Paris necessary on the part of Oxford and his son in the spring and summer of the year 1476, occupied them until that year was half spent.

In the meanwhile, the wars of the Duke of Burgundy with the Swiss cantons and Count Ferrand of Lorraine continued to rage. Before midsummer 1476, Charles had assembled a

new army of at least sixty thousand men, supported by one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, for the purpose of invading Switzerland, where the warlike mountaineers easily levied a host of thirty thousand Switzers, now accounted almost invincible, and called upon their confederates, the Free Cities on the Rhine, to support them with a powerful body of cavalry. The first efforts of Charles were successful. He overran the Pays de Vaud, and recovered most of the places which he had lost after the defeat at Granson. But, instead of attempting to secure a well-defended frontier, or, what would have been still more politic, to achieve a peace upon equitable terms with his redoubtable neighbors, this most obstinate of princes resumed the purpose of penetrating into the recesses of the Alpine mountains, and chastising the mountaineers even within their own strongholds, though experience might have taught him the danger, nay, desperation, of the attempt. Thus the news received by Oxford and his son, when they returned to Aix in midsummer, was, that Duke Charles had advanced to Morat (or Murten), situated upon a lake of the same name, at the very entrance of Switzerland. Here report said that Adrian de Bubenberg, a veteran knight of Berne, commanded and maintained the most obstinate defense, in expectation of the relief which his countrymen were hastily assembling.

"Alas, my old brother-in-arms!" said the Earl to his son, on hearing these tidings, "this town besieged, these assaults repelled, this vicinity of an enemy's country, this profound lake, these inaccessible cliffs, threaten a second part of the tragedy of Granson, more calamitous perhaps than even the former!"

On the last week of July [June], the capital of Provence was agitated by one of those unauthorized, yet generally received, rumors which transmit great events with incredible swiftness, as an apple flung from hand to hand by a number of people will pass a given space infinitely faster than if borne by the most rapid series of expresses. The report announced a second defeat of the Burgundians, in terms so exaggerated as induced the Earl of Oxford to consider the greater part, if not the whole, as a fabrication.

CHAPTER XXXIV

And is the hostile troop arrived,
And have they won the day?
It must have been a bloody field
Ere Darwent fled away!
The Ettrick Shepherd.

SLEEP did not close the eyes of the Earl of Oxford or his son; for, although the success or defeat of the Duke of Burgundy could not now be of importance to their own private or political affairs, yet the father did not cease to interest himself in the fate of his former companion-in-arms; and the son, with the fire of youth, always eager after novelty,* expected to find something to advance or thwart his own progress in every remarkable event which agitated the world.

Arthur had risen from his bed, and was in the act of attiring himself, when the tread of a horse arrested his attention. He had no sooner looked out of the window, than exclaiming, "News, my father—news from the army!" he rushed into the street, where a cavalier, who appeared to have ridden very hard, was inquiring for the two Philipsons, father and son. He had no difficulty in recognizing Colvin, the master of the Burgundian ordnance. His ghastly look bespoke distress of mind; his disordered array and broken armor, which seemed rusted with rain or stained with blood, gave the intelligence of some affray in which he had probably been worsted; and so exhausted was his gallant steed, that it was with difficulty the animal could stand upright. The condition of the rider was not much better. When he alighted from his horse to greet Arthur, he reeled so much that he would have fallen without instant support. His horny eye had lost the power of speculation, his limbs possessed imperfectly that of motion, and it was with a half-suffocated voice that he muttered, "Only fatigue—want of rest and of food."

Arthur assisted him into the house, and refreshments were procured; but he refused all except a bowl of wine, after tasting which he set it down, and looking at the Earl of Ox-

* Cupidus novarum rerum.

ford with an eye of the deepest affliction, he ejaculated, "The Duke of Burgundy!"

"Slain?" replied the Earl; "I trust not!"

"It might have been better if he were," said the Englishman; "but dishonor has come before death."

"Defeated, then?" said Oxford.

"So completely and fearfully defeated," answered the soldier, "that all that I have seen of loss before was slight in comparison."

"But how or where?" said the Earl of Oxford; "you were superior in numbers, as we were informed."

"Two to one at least," answered Colvin; "and when I speak of our encounter at this moment, I could rend my flesh with my teeth for being here to tell such a tale of shame. We had sat down for about a week before that paltry town of Murten, or Morat, or whatever it is called. The governor, one of those stubborn mountain bears of Berne, bade us defiance. He would not even condescend to shut his gates, but, when he summoned the town, returned for answer, we might enter if we pleased—we should be suitably received. I would have tried to bring him to reason by a salvo or two of artillery, but the Duke was too much irritated to listen to good counsel. Stimulated by that black traitor, Campo-basso, he deemed it better to run forward with his whole force upon a place which, though I could soon have battered it about their German ears, was yet too strong to be carried by swords, lances, and hagbuts. We were beaten off with great loss, and much discouragement to the soldiers. We then commenced more regularly, and by batteries would have brought these mad Switzers to their senses. Walls and ramparts went down before the lusty cannoneers of Burgundy; we were well secured also by intrenchments against those whom we heard of as approaching to raise the siege. But on the evening of the twentieth [twenty-first] of this month, we learned that they were close at hand, and Charles, consulting only his own bold spirit, advanced to meet them, relinquishing the advantage of our batteries and strong position. By his orders, though against my own judgment, I accompanied him with twenty good pieces, and the flower of my people. We broke up on the next morning, and had not advanced far before we saw the lances and thick array of halberds and two-handed swords which crested the mountain. Heaven, too, added its terrors; a thunderstorm, with all the fury of those tempestuous climates, descended on both armies, but did most annoyance

to ours, as our troops, especially the Italians, were more sensible to the torrents of rain which poured down, and the rivulets which, swelled into torrents, inundated and disordered our position. The Duke for once saw it necessary to alter his purpose of instant battle. He rode up to me, and directed me to defend with the cannon the retreat which he was about to commence, adding, that he himself would in person sustain me with the men-at-arms. The order was given to retreat. But the movement gave new spirit to an enemy already sufficiently audacious. The ranks of the Swiss instantly prostrated themselves in prayer—a practise on the field of battle which I have ridiculed, but I will do so no more. When, after five minutes, they sprung again on their feet, and began to advance rapidly, sounding their horns and crying their war-cries with all their usual ferocity, behold, my lord, the clouds of heaven opened, shedding on the Confederates the blessed light of the returning sun, while our ranks were still in the gloom of the tempest. My men were discouraged. The host behind them was retreating ; the sudden light thrown on the advancing Switzers showed along the mountains a profusion of banners, a glancing of arms, giving to the enemy the appearance of double the numbers that had hitherto been visible to us. I exhorted my followers to stand fast, but in doing so I thought a thought, and spoke a word, which was a grievous sin. "Stand fast, my brave cannoneers," I said, "we will presently let them hear louder thunders, and show them more fatal lightnings, than their prayers have put down!" My men shouted. But it was an impious thought—a blasphemous speech, and evil came after it. We leveled our guns on the advancing masses as fairly as cannon were ever pointed : I can vouch it, for I laid the Grand Duchess of Burgundy myself. Ah, poor Duchess! what rude hands manage thee now! The volley was fired, and ere the smoke spread from the muzzles I could see many a man and many a banner go down. It was natural to think such a discharge should have checked the attack, and whilst the smoke hid the enemy from us, I made every effort again to load our cannon, and anxiously endeavored to look through the mist to discover the state or our opponents. But ere our smoke was cleared away, or the cannon again loaded, they came headlong down on us, horse and foot, old men and boys, men-at-arms and varlets, charging up to the muzzle of the guns, and over them, with total disregard to their lives. My brave fellows were cut down, pierced through, and over-

run, while they were again loading their pieces, nor do I believe that a single cannon was fired a second time."

"And the Duke—" said the Earl of Oxford, "did he not support you?"

"Most loyally and bravely," answered Colvin, "with his own body-guard of Walloons and Burgundians. But a thousand Italian mercenaries went off, and never showed face again. The pass, too, was cumbered with the artillery, and in itself narrow, bordering on mountains and cliffs, a deep lake close beside. In short, it was a place totally unfit for horsemen to act in. In spite of the Duke's utmost exertions, and those of the gallant Flemings who fought around him, all were borne back in complete disorder. I was on foot, fighting as I could, without hopes of my life, or indeed, thoughts of saving it, when I saw the guns taken and my faithful cannoneers slain. But I saw Duke Charles hard pressed, and took my horse from my page that held him. Thou, too, art lost, my poor orphan boy! I could only aid Monseigneur de la Croye and others to extricate the Duke. Our retreat became a total rout, and when we reached our rear-guard, which we had lelf strongly encamped, the banners of the Switzers were waving on our batteries, for a large division had made a circuit through mountain passes known only to themselves, and attacked our camp, vigorously seconded by that accursed Adrian de Bubenberg, who sallied from the beleaguered town, so that our entrenchments were stormed on both sides at once. I have more to say, but, having ridden day and night to bring you these evil tidings, my tongue clings to the roof of my mouth, and I feel that I can speak no more. The rest is all flight and massacre, disgraceful to every soldier that shared in it. For my part, I confess my contumelious self-confidence and insolence to man, as well as blasphemy to Heaven. If I live, it is but to hide my disgraced head in a cowl, and expiate the numerous sins of a licentious life."

With difficulty the broken-minded soldier was prevailed upon to take some nourishment and repose, together with an opiate which was prescribed by the physician of King René, who recommended it as necessary to preserve even the reason of his patient, exhausted by the events of the battle and subsequent fatigue.

The Earl of Oxford, dismissing other assistance, watched alternately with his son at Colvin's bedside. Notwithstanding the draught that had been administered, his repose was far from sound. Sudden starts, the perspiration which

started from his brow, the distortions of his countenance, and the manner in which he clenched his fists and flung about his limbs, showed that in his dreams he was again encountering the terrors of a desperate and forlorn combat. This lasted for several hours; but about noon, fatigue and medicine prevailed over nervous excitation, and the defeated commander fell into a deep and untroubled repose till evening. About sunset he awakened, and, after learning with whom and where he was, he partook of refreshments, and, without any apparent consciousness of having told them before, detailed once more all the particulars of the battle of Murten.

"It were little wide of truth," he said, "to calculate that one half of the Duke's army fell by the sword or were driven into the lake. Those who escaped are great part of them scattered, never again to unite. Such a desperate and irretrievable rout was never witnessed. We fled like deer, sheep, or any other timid animals, which only remain in company because they are afraid to separate, but never think of order or of defense."

"And the Duke?" said the Earl of Oxford.

"We hurried him with us," said the soldier, "rather from instinct than loyalty, as men flying from a conflagration snatch up what they have of value, without knowing what they are doing. Knight and knave, officer and soldier, fled in the same panic, and each blast of horn of Uri in our rear added new wings to our flight.

"And the Duke?" repeated Oxford.

"At first he resisted our efforts, and strove to turn back on the foe; but when the flight became general, he galloped along with us, without a word spoken or a command issued. At first we thought his silence and passiveness, so unusual in a temper so fiery, were fortunate for securing his personal safety. But when we rode the whole day, without being able to obtain a word of reply to all our questions, when he sternly refused refreshments of every kind, though he had tasted no food all that disastrous day, when every variation of his moody and uncertain temper was sunk into silence and sullen despair, we took counsel what was to be done, and it was by the general voice that I was despatched to entreat that you, for whose counsels alone Charles has been known to have had some occasional deference, would come instantly to his place of retreat, and exert all your influence to awaken him from this lethargy, which may otherwise terminate his existence."

"And what remedy can I interpose?" said Oxford. "You know how he neglected my advice, when following it might have served my interest as well as his own. You are aware that my life was not safe among the miscreants that surrounded the Duke and exercised influence over him."

"Most true," answered Colvin; "but I also know he is your ancient companion-in-arms, and it would ill become me to teach the noble Earl of Oxford what the laws of chivalry require. For your lordship's safety, every honest man in the army will give willing security."

"It is for that I care least," said Oxford, indifferently; "and if indeed my presence can be of service to the Duke—if I could believe that he desired it——"

"He does—he does, my lord," said the faithful soldier, with tears in his eyes. "We heard him name your name, as if the words escaped him in a painful dream."

"I will go to him, such being the case," said Oxford—"I will go instantly. Where did he purpose to establish his head-quarters?"

"He had fixed nothing for himself on that or other matters; but Monsieur de Contay named La Rivière, near Salins, in Upper Burgundy, as the place of his retreat."

"Thither, then, will we, my son, with all haste of preparation. Thou, Colvin, hadst better remain here, and see some holy man, to be assoilzied for thy hasty speech on the battle-field of Morat. There was offense in it without doubt, but it will be ill atoned for by quitting a generous master when he hath most need of your good service; and it is but an act of cowardice to retreat into the cloister till we have no longer active duties to perform in this world."

"It is true," said Colvin, "that, should I leave the Duke now, perhaps not a man would stay behind that could stell a cannon properly. The sight of your lordship cannot but operate favorably on my noble master, since it has waked the old soldier in myself. If your lordship can delay your journey till to-morrow, I will have my spiritual affairs settled, and my bodily health sufficiently restored, to be your guide to La Rivière; and, for the cloister, I will think of it when I have regained the good name which I have lost at Murten. But I will have masses said, and these right powerful, for the souls of my poor cannoneers."

The proposal of Colvin was adopted, and Oxford, with his son, attended by Thiebault, spent the day in preparation, excepting the time necessary to take formal leave of King René, who seemed to part with them with regret. In com

pany with the ordnance officer of the discomfited duke, they traversed those parts of Provence, Dauphiné, and Franche-Compté, which lie between Aix and the place to which the Duke of Burgundy had retreated; but the distance and inconvenience of so long a route consumed more than a fortnight on the road, and the month of July 1476 was commenced when the travelers arrived in Upper Burgundy, and at the Castle of La Rivière, about twenty miles to the south of the town of Salins. The castle, which was but of small size, was surrounded by very many tents, which were pitched in a crowded, disordered, and unsoldierlike manner, very unlike the discipline usually observed in the camp of Charles the Bold. That the Duke was present there, however, was attested by his broad banner, which, rich with all its quarterings, streamed from the battlements of the castle. The guard turned out to receive the strangers, but in a manner so disorderly, that the Earl looked to Colvin for explanation. The master of the ordnance shrugged up his shoulders and was silent.

Colvin having sent in notice of his arrival, and that of the English earl, Monsieur de Contay caused them presently to be admitted, and expressed much joy at their arrival.

"A few of us," he said, "true servants of the Duke, are holding counsel here, at which your assistance, my noble Lord of Oxford, will be of the utmost importance. Messieurs De la Croye, De Craon, Rubempré, and others, nobles of Burgundy, are now assembled to superintend the defense of the country at this exigence."

They all expressed delight to see the Earl of Oxford, and had only abstained from thrusting their attentions on him the last time he was in the Duke's camp, as they understood it was his wish to observe incognito.

"His Grace," said De Craon, "has asked after you twice, and on both times by your assumed name of Philipson."

"I wonder not at that, my Lord of Craon," replied the English nobleman: "the origin of the name took its rise in former days, when I was here during my first exile. It was then said that we poor Lancastrian nobles must assume other names than our own, and the good Duke Philip said, as I was brother-in-arms to his son Charles, I must be called after himself, by the name of Philipson. In memory of the good sovereign, I took that name when the day of need actually arrived, and I see that the Duke thinks of our early intimacy by his distinguishing me so. How fares his Grace?"

The Burgundians looked at each other, and there was a pause.

"Even like a man stunned, brave Oxford," at length De Contay replied. "Sieur d'Argenton,* you can best inform the noble Earl of the condition of our sovereign."

"He is like a man distracted," said the future historian of that busy period. "After the battle of Granson, he was never, to my thinking, of the same sound judgment as before. But then he was capricious, unreasonable, peremptory, and inconsistent, and resented every counsel that was offered, as if it had been meant in insult; was jealous of the least trespass in point of ceremonial, as if his subjects were holding him in contempt. Now there is a total change, as if this second blow had stunned him, and suppressed the violent passions which the first called into action. He is silent as a Carthusian, solitary as a hermit, expresses interest in nothing, least of all in the guidance of his army. He was, you know, anxious about his dress; so much so, that there was some affectation even in the rudenesses which he practised in that matter. But, wo'es me, you will see a change now: he will not suffer his hair or nails to be trimmed or arranged. He is totally heedless of respect or disrespect towards him, takes little or no nourishment, uses strong wines, which, however, do not seem to affect his understanding; he will hear nothing of war or state affairs, as little of hunting or of sport. Suppose an anchorite brought from a cell to govern a kingdom, you see in him, except in point of devotion, a picture of the fiery, active Charles of Burgundy."

"You speak of a mind deeply wounded, Sieur d'Argenton," replied the Englishman. "Think you it fit I should present myself before the Duke?"

"I will inquire," said Contay; and leaving the apartment, returned presently, and made a sign to the Earl to follow him.

In a cabinet, or closet, the unfortunate Charles reclined in a large arm-chair, his legs carelessly stretched on a footstool, but so changed that the Earl of Oxford could have believed what he saw to be the ghost of the once fiery Duke. Indeed, the shaggy length of hair which, streaming from his head, mingled with his beard, the hollowness of the caverns at the bottom of which rolled his wild eyes, the falling in of the breast, and the advance of the shoulders, gave

* Philip des Comines, Sieur d'Argenton, author of *Historical Memoirs* (*Laing*). [*See Quentin Durward*, Notes 35, 45.]

the ghastly appearance of one who has suffered the final agony which takes from mortality the signs of life and energy. His very costume (a cloak flung loosely over him) increased his resemblance to a shrouded phantom. De Contay named the Earl of Oxford; but the Duke gazed on him with a lusterless eye, and gave him no answer.

"Speak to him, brave Oxford," said the Burgundian, in a whisper: "he is even worse than usual, but perhaps he may know your voice."

Never, when the Duke of Burgundy was in the most palmy state of his fortunes, did the noble Englishman kneel to kiss his hand with such sincere reverence. He respected in him not only the afflicted friend, but the humbled sovereign, upon whose tower of trust the lightning had so recently broken. It was probably the falling of a tear upon his hand which seemed to awake the Duke's attention, for he looked towards the Earl and said, "Oxford—Philipson—my old—my only friend, hast thou found me out in this retreat of shame and misery?"

"I am not your only friend, my lord," said Oxford. "Heaven has given you many affectionate friends among your natural and loyal subjects. But though a stranger, and saving the allegiance I owe to my lawful sovereign, I will yield to none of them in the respect and deference which I have paid to your Grace in prosperity, and now come to render to you in adversity."

"Adversity indeed!" said the Duke—"irremediable, intolerable adversity! I was lately Charles of Burgundy, called the Bold; now am I twice beaten by a scum of German peasants, my standard taken, my men-at-arms put to flight, my camp twice plundered, and each time of value more than equal to the price of all Switzerland fairly lost; myself hunted like a catiff goat or chamois. The utmost spite of hell could never accumulate more shame on the head of a sovereign!"

"On the contrary, my lord," said Oxford, "it is a trial of Heaven, which calls for patience and strength of mind. The bravest and best knight may lose the saddle; he is but a laggard who lies rolling on the sand of the lists after the accident has chanced."

"Ha, laggard, sayst thou?" said the Duke, some part of his ancient spirit awakened by the broad taunt. "Leave my presence, sir, and return to it no more till you are summoned thither——"

"Which I trust will be no later than your Grace quits your

dishabille, and disposes yourself to see your vassals and friends with such ceremony as befits you and them," said the Earl, composedly.

"How mean you by that, sir earl? You are unmannerly."

"If I be, my lord, I am taught my ill breeding by circumstances. I can mourn over fallen dignity; but I cannot honor him who dishonors himself by bending, like a regardless boy, beneath the scourge of evil fortune."

"And who am I that you should term me such?" said Charles, starting up in all his natural pride and ferocity; "or who are you but a miserable exile, that you should break in upon my privacy with such disrespectful upbraiding?"

"For me," replied Oxford, "I am, as you say, an unrespected exile; nor am I ashamed of my condition, since unshaken loyalty to my king and his successors has brought me to it. But in you, can I recognize the Duke of Burgundy in a sullen hermit, whose guards are a disorderly soldiery, dreadful only to their friends; whose councils are in confusion for want of their sovereign, and who himself lurks like a lamed wolf in its den, in an obscure castle, waiting but a blast of the Switzer's horn to fling open its gates, which there are none to defend; who wears not a knightly sword to protect his person, and cannot even die like a stag at bay, but must be worried like a hunted fox?"

"Death and hell, slanderous traitor!" thundered the Duke, glancing a look at his side, and perceiving himself without a weapon. "It is well for thee I have no sword, or thou shouldst never boast of thine insolence going unpunished. Contay, step forth like a good knight and confute the calumniator. Say, are not my soldiers arrayed, disciplined, and in order?"

"My lord," said Contay, trembling (brave as he was in battle) at the frantic rage which Charles exhibited, "there are a numerous soldiery yet under your command, but they are in evil order, and in worse discipline, I think, than they were wont."

"I see it—I see it," said the Duke; "idle and evil counselors are ye all. Hearken, Sir of Contay, what have you and the rest of you been doing, holding as you do large lands and high fiefs of us, that I cannot stretch my limbs on a sick-bed, when my heart is half broken, by troops must fall into such scandalous disorder as exposes me to the scorn and reproach of each beggarly foreigner?"

"My lord," replied Contay, more firmly, "we have done what we could. But your Grace has accustomed your mer-

cenary generals and leaders of Free Companies to take their orders only from your own mouth or hand. They clamor also for pay, and the treasurer refuses to issue it without your Grace's order, as he alleges it might cost him his head; and they will not be guided and restrained, either by us or those who compose your council."

The Duke laughed sternly, but was evidently somewhat pleased with the reply.

"Ha, ha!" he said, "it is only Burgundy who can ride his own wild horses, and rule his own wild soldiery. Hark thee, Contay. To-morrow I ride forth to review the troops; for what disorder has passed, allowance shall be made. Pay also shall be issued; but woe to those who shall have offended too deeply! Let my grooms of the chamber know to provide me fitting dress and arms. I have got a lesson (glancing a dark look at Oxford), and I will not again be insulted without the means of wreaking my vengeance. Begone, both of you. And, Contay, send the treasurer hither with his accounts, and woe to his soul if I find aught to complain of! Begone, I say, and send him hither."

They left the apartment with suitable obeisance. As they retired, the Duke said, abruptly, "Lord of Oxford, a word with you. Where did you study medicine? In your own famed university, I suppose. Thy physic hath wrought a wonder. Yet, Doctor Philipson, it might have cost thee thy life."

"I have ever thought my life cheap," said Oxford, "when the object was to help my friend."

"Thou art indeed a friend," said Charles, "and a fearless one. But go—I have been sore troubled, and thou hast tasked my temper closely. To-morrow we will speak further; meantime, I forgive thee, and I honor thee."

The Earl of Oxford retired to the council-hall, where the Burgundian nobility, aware of what had passed, crowded around him with thanks, compliments, and congratulations. A general bustle now ensued; orders were hurried off in every direction. Those officers who had duties to perform which had been neglected hastened to conceal or to atone for their negligence. There was a general tumult in the camp, but it was a tumult of joy; for soldiers are always most pleased when they are best in order for performing their military service; and license or inactivity, however acceptable at times, are not, when continued, so agreeable to their nature as strict discipline and a prospect of employment.

The treasurer, who was, luckily for him, a man of sense and method, having been two hours in private with the Duke, returned with looks of wonder, and professed that never, in Charles's most prosperous days, had he showed himself more acute in the department of finance, of which he had but that morning seemed totally incapable; and the merit was universally attributed to the visit of Lord Oxford, whose timely reprimand had, like the shot of a cannon dispersing foul mists, awakened the Duke from his black and bilious melancholy.

On the following day, Charles reviewed his troops with his usual attention, directed new levies, made various dispositions of his forces, and corrected the faults of their discipline by severe orders, which were enforced by some deserved punishments (of which the Italian mercenaries of Campo-basso had a large share), and rendered palatable by the payment of arrears, which was calculated to attach them to the standard under which they served.

The Duke also, after consulting with his council, agreed to convoke meetings of the States in his different territories, redress certain popular grievances, and grant some boons which he had hitherto denied; and thus began to open a new account of popularity with his subjects, in place of that which his rashness had exhausted.

CHAPTER XXXV

> Here's a weapon now
> Shall shake a conquering general in his tent,
> A monarch on his throne, or reach a prelate,
> However holy be his offices,
> E'en while he serves the altar.
>
> *Old Play.*

FROM this time all was activity in the Duke of Burgundy's court and army. Money was collected, soldiers were levied, and certain news of the Confederates' motions only were wanting to bring on the campaign. But although Charles was, to all outward appearance, as active as ever, yet those who were more immediately about his person were of opinion that he did not display the soundness of mind or the energy of judgment which had been admired in him before these calamities. He was still liable to fits of moody melancholy, similar to those which descended upon Saul, and was vehemently furious when aroused out of them. Indeed, the Earl of Oxford himself seemed to have lost the power which he had exercised over him at first. Nay, though in general Charles was both grateful and affectionate towards him, he evidently felt humbled by the recollection of his having witnessed his impotent and disastrous condition, and was so much afraid of Lord Oxford being supposed to lead his counsels, that he often repelled his advice, merely, as it seemed, to show his own independence of mind.

In these froward humors, the Duke was much encouraged by Campo-basso. That wily traitor now saw his master's affairs tottering to their fall, and he resolved to lend his lever to the work, so as to entitle him to a share of the spoil. He regarded Oxford as one of the most able friends and counselors who adhered to the Duke; he thought he saw in his looks that he fathomed his own treacherous purpose, and therefore he hated and feared him. Besides, in order perhaps to color over, even to his own eyes, the abominable perfidy he meditated, he affected to be exceedingly enraged against the Duke for the late punishment of marauders belonging to his Italian bands. He believed that chastisement to have been inflicted by the advice of Oxford; and he sus-

pected that the measure was pressed with the hope of discovering that the Italians had not pillaged for their own emolument only, but for that of their commander. Believing that Oxford was thus hostile to him, Campo-basso would have speedily found means to take him out of his path, had not the Earl himself found it prudent to observe some precautions; and the lords of Flanders and Burgundy, who loved him for the very reasons for which the Italian abhorred him, watched over his safety with a vigilance of which he himself was ignorant, but which certainly was the means of preserving his life.

It was not to be supposed that Ferrand of Lorraine should have left his victory so long unimproved; but the Swiss Confederates, who were the strength of his forces, insisted that the first operations should take place in Savoy and the Pays de Vaud, where the Burgundians had many garrisons, which though they received no relief, yet were not easily or speedily reduced. Besides, the Switzers being, like most of the national soldiers of the time, a kind of militia, most of them returned home to get in their harvest and to deposit their spoil in safety. Ferrand, therefore, though bent on pursuing his success with all the ardor of youthful chivalry, was prevented from making any movement in advance until the month of December 1476. In the meantime, the Duke of Burgundy's forces, to be least burdensome to the country, were cantoned in distant places of his dominions, where every exertion was made to perfect the discipline of the new levies. The Duke, if left to himself, would have precipitated the struggle by again assembling his forces and pushing forward into the Helvetian territories; but, though he inwardly foamed at the recollection of Granson and Murten, the memory of these disasters was too recent to permit such a plan of the campaign. Meantime, weeks glided past, and the month of December was far advanced when one morning, as the Duke was sitting in council, Campo-basso suddenly entered, with a degree of extravagant rapture in his countenance singularly different from the cold, regulated, and subtle smile which was usually his utmost advance towards laughter. "*Guantes,*"* he said—"*guantes,* for luck's sake, if it please your Grace."

"And what of good fortune comes nigh us?" said the Duke. "Methought she had forgot the way to our gates."

"She has returned to them, please your Highness, with her cornucopia full of choicest gifts, ready to pour her fruit,

* See Note 11.

her flowers, her treasures, on the head of the sovereign of Europe most worthy to receive them."

"The meaning of all this?" said Duke Charles: "riddles are for children."

"The harebrained young madman Ferrand, who calls himself of Lorraine, has broken down from the mountains, at the head of a desultory army of scapegraces like himself; and what think you—ha! ha! ha!—they are overrunning Lorraine, and have taken Nancy—ha! ha! ha!"

"By my good faith, sir count," said Contay, astonished at the gay humor with which the Italian treated a matter so serious, "I have seldom heard a fool laugh more gaily at a more scurvy jest than you, a wise man, laugh at the loss of the principal town of the province we are fighting for."

"I laugh," said Campo-basso, "among the spears, as my war-horse does—ha! ha!—among the trumpets. I laugh also over the destruction of the enemy, and the dividing of the spoil as eagles scream their joy over the division of their prey. I laugh——"

"You laugh," said the Lord of Contay, waxing impatient, "when you have all the mirth to yourself, as you laughed after our losses at Granson and Murten."

"Peace, sir!" said the Duke. "The Count of Campobasso has viewed the case as I do. This young knight-errant ventures from the protection of his mountains; and Heaven deal with me as I keep my oath, when I swear that the next fair field on which we meet shall see one of us dead! It is now the last week of the old year, and before Twelfth Day we will see whether he or I shall find the bean in the cake. To arms, my lords: let our camp instantly break up, and our troops move forward towards Lorraine. Send off the Italian and Albanian light cavalry, and the Stradiots, to scour the country in the van. Oxford, thou wilt bear arms in this journey, wilt thou not?"

"Surely," said the Earl. "I am eating your Highness's bread; and when enemies invade, it stands with my honor to fight for your Grace as if I was your born subject. With your Grace's permission, I will despatch a pursuivant, who shall carry letters to my late kind host, the Landamman of Unterwalden, acquainting him with my purpose."

The Duke having given a ready assent, the pursuivant was dismissed accordingly, and returned in a few hours, so near had the armies approached to each other. He bore a letter from the Landamman, in a tone of courtesy and even kindness, regretting that any cause should have occurred for bear-

ing arms against his late guest, for whom he expressed high personal regard. The same pursuivant also brought greetings from the family of the Biedermans to their friend Arthur, and a separate letter, addressed to the same person, of which the contents ran thus :—

"Rudolph Donnerhugel is desirous to give the young merchant, Arthur Philipson, the opportunity of finishing the bargain which remained unsettled between them in the castle-court of Geierstein. He is the more desirous of this as he is aware that the said Arthur has done him wrong, in seducing the affections of a certain maiden of rank, to whom he, Philipson, is not, and cannot be, anything beyond an ordinary acquaintance. Rudolph Donnerhugel will send Arthur Philipson word when a fair and equal meeting can take place on neutral ground. In the meantime, he will be as often as possible in the first rank of the skirmishers."

Young Arthur's heart leaped high as he read the defiance, the piqued tone of which showed the state of the writer's feelings, and argued sufficiently Rudolph's disappointment on the subject of Anne of Geierstein, and his suspicion that she had bestowed her affections on the youthful stranger. Arthur found means of despatching a reply to the challenge of the Swiss, assuring him of the pleasure with which he would attend his commands, either in front of the line or elsewhere, as Rudolph might desire.

Meantime the armies were closely approaching to each other, and the light troops sometimes met. The Stradiots from the Venetian territory, a sort of cavalry resembling that of the Turks, performed much of that service on the part of the Burgundian army, for which, indeed, if their fidelity could have been relied on, they were admirably well qualified. The Earl of Oxford observed, that these men, who were under the command of Campo-basso, always brought in intelligence that the enemy were in indifferent order and in full retreat. Besides, information was communicated through their means that sundry individuals, against whom the Duke of Burgundy entertained peculiar personal dislike, and whom he specially desired to get into his hands had taken refuge in Nancy. This greatly increased the Duke's ardor for retaking that place, which became perfectly ungovernable when he learned that Ferrand and his Swiss allies had drawn off to a neighboring position called St. Nicholas, on the news of his arrival. The greater part of the Burgundian counselors, to-

gether with the Earl of Oxford, protested against his besieging a place of some strength, while an active enemy lay in the neighborhood to relieve it. They remonstrated on the smallness of his army, on the severity of the weather, on the difficulty of obtaining provisions, and exhorted the Duke, that having made such a movement as had forced the enemy to retreat, he ought to suspend decisive operations till spring. Charles at first tried to dispute and repel these arguments; but when his counselors reminded him that he was placing himself and his army in the same situation as at Granson and Murten, he became furious at the recollection, foamed at the mouth, and only answered by oaths and imprecations that he would be master of Nancy before Twelfth Day.

Accordingly, the army of Burgundy sat down before Nancy, in a strong position, protected by the hollow of a watercourse, and covered with thirty pieces of cannon, which Colvin had under his charge.

Having indulged his obstinate temper in thus arranging the campaign, the Duke seemed to give a little more heed to the advice of his counselors touching the safety of his person, and permitted the Earl of Oxford, with his son, and two or three officers of his household, men of approved trust, to sleep within his pavilion, in addition to the usual guard.

It wanted three days of Christmas when the Duke sat down before Nancy, and on that very evening a tumult happened which seemed to justify the alarm for his personal safety. It was midnight, and all in the ducal pavilion were as rest, when a cry of treason arose. The Earl of Oxford, drawing his sword, and snatching up a light which burned beside him, rushed into the Duke's apartment, and found him standing on the floor totally undressed, but with his sword in his hand, and striking around him so furiously, that the Earl himself had difficulty in avoiding his blows. The rest of his officers rushed in, their weapons drawn, and their cloaks wrapped around their left arms. When the Duke was somewhat composed, and found himself surrounded by his friends, he informed them, with rage and agitation, that the officers of the Secret Tribunal had, in spite of the vigilant precautions taken, found means to gain entrance into his chamber, and charged him, under the highest penalty, to appear before the Holy Vehme upon Christmas night.

The bystanders heard this story with astonishment, and some of them were uncertain whether they ought to con-

sider it as a reality or a dream of the Duke's irritable fancy. But the citation was found on the Duke's toilet, written, as was the form, upon parchment, signeted with three crosses, and stuck to the table with a knife. A slip of wood had been also cut from the table. Oxford read the summons with attention. It named, as usual, a place, where the Duke was cited to come unarmed and unattended, and from which it was said he would be guided to the seat of judgment.

Charles, after looking at the scroll for some time, gave vent to his thoughts.

"I know from what quiver this arrow comes," he said. "It is shot by that degenerate noble, apostate priest, and accomplice of sorcerers, Albert of Geierstein. We have heard that he is among the motley group of murderers and outlaws whom the old fiddler of Provence's grandson has raked together. But, by St. George of Burgundy! neither monk's cowl, soldier's casque, nor conjurer's cap shall save him after such an insult as this. I will degrade him from knighthood, hang him from the highest steeple in Nancy, and his daughter shall choose between the meanest herd-boy in my army and the convent of *filles repentées*."

"Whatever are your purposes, my lord," said Contay, "it were surely best be silent, when, from this late apparition, we may conjecture that more than we wot of may be within hearing."

The Duke seemed struck with this hint, and was silent, or at least only muttered oaths and threats betwixt his teeth, while the strictest search was made for the intruder on his repose. But it was in vain.

Charles continued his researches, incensed at a flight of audacity higher than ever had been ventured upon by these Secret Societies, who, whatever might be the dread inspired by them, had not as yet attempted to cope with sovereigns. A trusty party of Burgundians were sent on Christmas night to watch the spot (a meeting of four cross roads), named in the summons, and make prisoners of any whom they could lay hands upon; but no suspicious persons appeared at or near the place. The Duke not the less continued to impute the affront he had received to Albert of Geierstein. There was a price set upon his head; and Campo-basso, always willing to please his master's mood, undertook that some of his Italians, sufficiently experienced in such feats, should bring the obnoxious baron before him, alive or dead. Colvin, Contay, and others laughed in secret at the Italian's promises.

"Subtle as he is," said Colvin, "he will lure the wild vulture from the heavens before he gets Albert of Geierstein into his power."

Arthur, to whom the words of the Duke had given subject for no small anxiety, on account of Anne of Geierstein, and of her father for her sake, breathed more lightly on hearing his menaces held so cheaply.

It was the second day after this alarm that Oxford felt a desire to reconnoiter the camp of Ferrand of Lorraine, having some doubts whether the strength and position of it were accurately reported. He obtained the Duke's consent for this purpose, who at the same time made him and his son a present of two noble steeds of great power and speed, which he himself highly valued.

So soon as the Duke's pleasure was communicated to the Italian Count, he expressed the utmost joy that he was to have the assistance of Oxford's age and experience upon an exploratory party, and selected a chosen band of an hundred Stradiots, whom he said he had sent sometimes to skirmish up to the very beards of the Switzers. The Earl showed himself much satisfied with the active and intelligent manner in which these men performed their duty, and drove before them and dispersed some parties of Ferrand's cavalry. At the entrance of a little ascending valley, Campo-basso communicated to the English noblemen that, if they could advance to the farther extremity, they would have a full view of the enemy's position. Two or three Stradiots then spurred on to examine this defile, and, returning back, communicated with their leader in their own language, who, pronouncing the passage safe, invited the Earl of Oxford to accompany him. They proceeded through the valley without seeing an enemy, but, on issuing upon a plain at the point intimated by Campo-basso, Arthur, who was in the van of the Stradiots, and separated from his father, did indeed see the camp of Duke Ferrand within half a mile's distance; but a body of cavalry had that instant issued from it, and were riding hastily towards the gorge of the valley, from which he had just emerged. He was about to wheel his horse and ride off, but, conscious of the great speed of the animal, he thought he might venture to stay for a moment's more accurate survey of the camp. The Stradiots who attended him did not wait his orders to retire, but went off, as was indeed their duty, when attacked by a superior force.

Meantime, Arthur observed that the knight who seemed leader of the advancing squadron, mounted on a powerful

horse that shook the earth beneath him, bore on his shield the Bear of Berne, and had otherwise the appearance of the massive frame of Rudolph Donnerhugel. He was satisfied of this when he beheld the cavalier halt his party and advance towards him alone, putting his lance in rest, and moving slowly, as if to give him time for preparation. To accept such a challenge, in such a moment, was dangerous, but to refuse it was disgraceful ; and while Arthur's blood boiled at the idea of chastising an insolent rival, he was not a little pleased at heart that their meeting on horseback gave him an advantage over the Swiss, through his perfect acquaintance with the practise of the tourney, in which Rudolph might be supposed more ignorant.

They met, as was the phrase of the time, "manful under shield." The lance of the Swiss glanced from the helmet of the Englishman, against which it was addressed, while the spear of Arthur, directed right against the center of his adversary's body, was so justly aimed, and so truly seconded by the full fury of the career, as to pierce, not only the shield which hung round the ill-fated warrior's neck, but a breastplate, and a shirt of mail which he wore beneath it. Passing clear through the body, the steel point of the weapon was only stopped by the back-piece of the unfortunate cavalier, who fell headlong from his horse, as if struck by lightning, rolled twice or thrice over on the ground, tore the earth with his hands, and then lay prostrate a dead corpse.

There was a cry of rage and grief among those men-at-arms whose ranks Rudolph had that instant left, and many couched their lances to avenge him ; but Ferrand of Lorraine, who was present in person, ordered them to make prisoner, but not to harm, the successful champion. This was accomplished, for Arthur had not time to turn his bridle for flight, and resistance would have been madness.

When brought before Ferrand, he raised his visor, and said, "Is it well, my lord, to make captive an adventurous knight for doing his devoir against a personal challenger ?"

"Do not complain, Sir Arthur of Oxford," said Ferrand, "before you experience injury. You are free, sir knight. Your father and you were faithful to my royal aunt Margaret, and, although she was my enemy, I do justice to your fidelity in her behalf ; and from respect to her memory, disinherited as she was like myself, and to please my grandfather, who I think had some regard for you, I give you your freedom. But I must also care for your safety during your return to the camp of Burgundy. On this side of the

hill we are loyal and true-hearted men; on the other they are traitors and murderers. You, sir count, will, I think, gladly see our captive placed in safety."

The knight to whom Ferrand addressed himself, a tall stately man, put himself in motion to attend on Arthur, while the former was expressing to the young Duke of Lorraine the sense he entertained of his chivalrous conduct. "Farewell, Sir Arthur de Vere," said Ferrand. "You have slain a noble champion, and to me a most useful and faithful friend. But it was done nobly and openly, with equal arms, and in the front of the line; and evil befall him who entertains feud first!" Arthur bowed to his saddle-bow. Ferrand returned the salutation, and they parted.

Arthur and his new companion had ridden but a little way up the ascent, when the stranger spoke thus:—

"We have been fellow-travelers before, young man, yet you remember me not."

Arthur turned his eyes on the cavalier, and, observing that the crest which adorned his helmet was fashioned like a vulture, strange suspicions began to cross his mind, which were confirmed when the knight, opening his helmet, showed him the dark and severe features of the priest of St. Paul's.

"Count Albert of Geierstein!" said Arthur.

"The same," replied the Count, "though thou hast seen him in other garb and head-gear. But tyranny drives all men to arms, and I have resumed, by the license and command of my superiors, those which I have laid aside. A war against cruelty and oppression is holy as that waged in Palestine, in which priests bear armor."

"My Lord Count," said Arthur, eagerly, "I cannot too soon entreat you to withdraw to Sir Ferrand of Lorraine's squadron. Here you are in peril, where no strength of courage can avail you. The Duke has placed a price on your head; and the country betwixt this and Nancy swarms with Stradiots and Italian light horsemen."

"I laugh at them," answered the Count. "I have not lived so long in a stormy world, amid intrigues of war and policy, to fall by the mean hand of such as they; besides, thou art with me, and I have seen but now that thou canst bear thee nobly."

"In your defense, my lord," said Arthur, who thought of his companion as the father of Anne of Geierstein, "I should try to do my best."

"What, youth!" replied Count Albert with a stern sneer that was peculiar to his countenauce; "wouldst thou aid the

enemy of the lord under whose banner thou servest against his waged soldiers?"

Arthur was somewhat abashed at the turn given to his ready offer of assistance, for which he had expected at least thanks; but he instantly collected himself, and replied, "My Lord Count Albert, you have been pleased to put yourself in peril to protect me from partizans of your party; I am equally bound to defend you from those of our side."

"It is happily answered," said the count; "yet I think there is a little blind partizan, of whom troubadours and minstrels talk, to whose instigation I might, in case of need, owe the great zeal of my protector."

He did not allow Arthur, who was a good deal embarrassed, time to reply, but proceeded—"Hear me, young man. Thy lance has this day done an evil deed to Switzerland, to Berne, and Duke Ferrand, in slaying their bravest champion. But to me the death of Rudolph Donnerhugel is a welcome event. Know that he was, as his services grew more indispensable, become importunate in requiring Duke Ferrand's interest with me for my daughter's hand. And the Duke himself, the son of a princess, blushed not to ask me to bestow the fast of my house—for my brother's family are degenerate mongrels—upon a presumptuous young man, whose uncle was a domestic in the house of my wife's father, though they boasted some relationship, I believe, through an illegitimate channel, which yonder Rudolph was wont to make the most of, as it favored his suit."

"Surely," said Arthur, "a match with one so unequal in birth, and far more in every other respect, was too monstrous to be mentioned?"

"While I lived," replied Count Albert, "never should such union have been formed, if the death both of bride and bridegroom by my dagger could have saved the honor of my house from violation. But when I—I whose days, whose very hours are numbered—shall be no more, what could prevent an undaunted suitor, fortified by Duke Ferrand's favor, by the general applause of his country, and perhaps by the unfortunate prepossession of my brother Arnold, from carrying his point against the resistance and scruples of a solitary maiden?"

"Rudolph is dead," replied Arthur, "and may Heaven assoilzie him from guilt! But were he alive, and urging his suit on Anne of Geierstein, he would find there was a combat to be fought——"

"Which has been already decided," answered Count Albert.

"Now, mark me, Arthur de Vere! My daughter has told me of the passages betwixt you and her. Your sentiments and conduct are worthy of the noble house you descend from, which I well know ranks with the most illustrious in Europe. You are indeed disinherited, but so is Anne of Geierstein, save such pittance as her uncle may impart to her of her paternal inheritance. If you share it together till better days—always supposing your noble father gives his consent, for my child shall enter no house against the will of its head—my daughter knows that she has my willing consent and my blessing. My brother shall also know my pleasure. He will approve my purpose; for, though dead to thoughts of honor and chivalry, he is alive to social feelings, loves his niece, and has friendship for thee and for thy father. What say'st thou, young man, to taking a beggarly countess to aid thee in the journey of life? I believe—nay, I prophesy, for I stand so much on the edge of the grave that methinks I command a view beyond it, that a luster will one day, after I have long ended my doubtful and stormy life, beam on the coronets of De Vere and Geierstein."

De Vere threw himself from his horse, clasped the hand of Count Albert, and was about to exhaust himself in thanks; but the Count insisted on his silence.

"We are about to part," he said. "The time is short, the place is dangerous. You are to me, personally speaking, less than nothing. Had any one of the many schemes of ambition which I have pursued led me to success, the son of a banished earl had not been the son-in-law I had chosen. Rise and remount your horse; thanks are unpleasing when they are not merited."

Arthur arose, and, mounting his horse, threw his raptures into a more acceptable form, endeavoring to describe how his love for Anne, and efforts for her happiness, should express his gratitude to her father; and, observing that the Count listened with some pleasure to the picture he drew of their future life, he could not help exclaiming, "And you, my lord—you who have been the author of all this happiness, will you not be the witness and partaker of it? Believe me, we will strive to soften the effect of the hard blows which fortune has dealt to you, and should a ray of better luck shine upon us, it will be the more welcome that you can share it."

"Forbear such folly," said the Count Albert of Geierstein. "I know my last scene is approaching. Hear and tremble. The Duke of Burgundy is sentenced to die, and the Secret

and Invisible Judges, who doom in secret and avenge in secret, like the Deity, have given the cord and the dagger to my hand."

"Oh, cast from you these vile symbols!" exclaimed Arthur, with enthusiasm—"let them find butchers and common stabbers to do such an office, and not dishonor the noble Lord of Geierstein!"

"Peace, foolish boy," answered the Count. "The oath by which I am sworn is higher than that clouded sky, more deeply fixed than those distant mountains. Nor think my act is that of an assassin, though for such I might plead the Duke's own example. I send not hirelings, like these base Stradiots, to hunt his life, without imperiling mine own. I give not his daughter, innocent of his offenses, the choice betwixt a disgraceful marriage and a discreditable retreat from the world. No, Arthur de Vere, I seek Charles with the resolved mind of one who, to take the life of an adversary, exposes himself to certain death."

"I pray you speak no farther of it," said Arthur, very anxiously. "Consider I serve for the present the prince whom you threaten——"

"And art bound," interrupted the Count, "to unfold to him what I tell you. I desire you should do so; and though he hath already neglected a summons of the Tribunal, I am glad to have this opportunity of sending him personal defiance. Say to Charles of Burgundy, that he has wronged Albert of Geierstein. He who is injured in his honor loses all value for his life, and whoever does so has full command over that of another man. Bid him keep himself well from me, since, if he see a second sun of the approaching year rise over the distant Alps, Albert of Geierstein is forsworn. And now begone, for I see a party approach under a Burgundian banner. They will ensure your safety, but, should I remain longer, would endanger mine."

So saying, the Count of Geierstein turned his horse and rode off.

CHAPTER XXXVI

Faint the din of battle bray'd
  Distant down the heavy wind;
War and terror fled before,
  Wounds and death were left behind.
MICKLE.

ARTHUR, left alone, and desirous perhaps to cover the retreat of Count Albert, rode towards the approaching body of Burgundian cavalry, who were arrayed under the Lord Contay's banner.

"Welcome—welcome," said that nobleman, advancing hastily to the young knight. "The Duke of Burgundy is a mile hence, with a body of horse to support the reconnoitering party. It is not half an hour since your father galloped up, and stated that you had been led into an ambuscade by the treachery of the Stradiots, and made prisoner. He has impeached Campo-basso of treason, and challenged him to the combat. They have both been sent to the camp, under charge of the grand marshal, to prevent their fighting on the spot, though I think our Italian showed little desire to come to blows. The Duke holds their gages, and they are to fight upon Twelfth Day."

"I doubt that day will never dawn for some who look for it," said Arthur; "but if it do, I will myself claim the combat, by my father's permission."

He then turned with Contay, and met a still larger body of cavalry under the Duke's broad banner. He was instantly brought before Charles. The Duke heard, with some apparent anxiety, Arthur's support of his father's accusations against the Italian, in whose favor he was so deeply prejudiced. When assured that the Stradiots had been across the hill, and communicated with their leader just before he encouraged Arthur to advance, as it proved, into the midst of an ambush, the Duke shook his head, lowered his shaggy brows, and muttered to himself—"Ill will to Oxford, perhaps—these Italians are vindictive." Then raising his head, he commanded Arthur to proceed.

He heard with a species of ecstasy the death of Rudolph Donnerhugel, and, taking a ponderous gold chain from his own neck, flung it over Arthur's

"Why, thou hast forestalled all our honors, young Arthur: this was the biggest bear of them all: the rest are but suckling whelps to him. I think I have found a youthful David to match their huge thick-headed Goliath. But the idiot, to think his peasant hand could manage a lance! Well, my brave boy, what more? How camest thou off? By some wily device or agile stratagem, I warrant."

"Pardon me, my lord," answered Arthur. "I was protected by their chief, Ferrand, who considered my encounter with Rudolph Donnerhugel as a personal duel; and desirous to use fair war, as he said, dismissed me honorably, with my horse and arms."

"Umph!" said Charles, his bad humor returning; "your Prince Adventurer must play the generous. Umph—well it belongs to his part, but shall not be a line for me to square my conduct by. Proceed with your story, Sir Arthur de Vere."

As Arthur proceeded to tell how, and under what circumstances, Count Albert of Geierstein named himself to him, the Duke fixed on him an eager look, and trembled with impatience as he fiercely interrupted him with the question —"And you—you struck him with your poniard under the fifth rib, did you not?"

"I did not, my Lord Duke; we were pledged in mutual assurance to each other."

"Yet you knew him to be my mortal enemy?" said the Duke. "Go, young man, thy lukewarm indifference has canceled thy merit. The escape of Albert of Geierstein hath counterbalanced the death of Rudolph Donnerhugel."

"Be it so, my lord," said Arthur, boldly. "I neither claim your praises nor deprecate your censure. I had to move me in either case motives personal to myself: Donnerhugel was my enemy, and to Count Albert I owe some kindness."

The Burgundian nobles who stood around were terrified for the effect of this bold speech. But it was never possible to guess with accuracy how such things would affect Charles. He looked around him with a laugh. "Hear you this English cockerel, my lords; what a note will he one day sound, that already crows so bravely in a prince's presence?"

A few horsemen now came in from different quarters, recounting that the Duke Ferrand and his company had retired into their encampment, and the country was clear of the enemy.

"Let us then draw back also," said Charles, "since there is no chance of breaking spears to-day. And thou, Arthur de Vere, attend me closely."

Arrived in the Duke's pavilion, Arthur underwent an examination, in which he said nothing of Anne of Geierstein, or her father's designs concerning him, with which he considered Charles as having nothing to do; but he frankly conveyed to him the personal threats which the Count had openly used. The Duke listened with more temper, and when he heard the expression, "That a man who is desperate of his own life might command that of any other person," he said, "But there is a life beyond this, in which he who is treacherously murdered and his base and desperate assassin shall each meet their deserts." He then took from his bosom a gold cross, and kissed it, with much appearance of devotion. "In this," said he, "I will place my trust. If I fail in this world, may I find grace in the next. Ho, sir marshal!" he exclaimed. "Let your prisoners attend us."

The marshal of Burgundy entered with the Earl of Oxford, and stated that his other prisoner, Campo-basso, had desired so earnestly that he might be suffered to go and post his sentinels on that part of the camp entrusted to the protection of his troops, that he, the marshal, had thought fit to comply with his request.

"It is well," said Burgundy, without further remark. "Then to you my Lord Oxford I would present your son, had you not already locked him in your arms. He has won great *los* and honor, and done me brave service. This is a period of the year when good men forgive their enemies. I know not why—my mind was little apt to be charged with such matters—but I feel an unconquerable desire to stop the approaching combat betwixt you and Campo-basso. For my sake, consent to be friends, and to receive back your gage of battle, and let me conclude this year—perhaps the last I may see—with a deed of peace."

"My lord," said Oxford, "it is a small thing you ask of me, since your request only enforces a Christian duty. I was enraged at the loss of my son. I am grateful to Heaven and your Grace for restoring him. To be friends with Campo-basso is to me impossible. Faith and treason, truth and falsehood, might as soon shake hands and embrace. But the Italian shall be to me no more than he has been before this rupture; and that is literally nothing. I put my honor in your Grace's hands; if he receives back his gage, I am willing to receive mine. John de Vere needs not be appre-

hensive that the world will suppose that he fears Campo-basso."

The Duke returned sincere thanks, and detained the officers to spend the evening in his tent. His manners seemed to Arthur to be more placid than he had ever seen them before, while to the Earl of Oxford they recalled the earlier days in which their intimacy commenced, ere absolute power and unbounded success had spoiled Charles's rough but not ungenerous disposition. The Duke ordered a distribution of provisions and wine to the soldiers, and expressed an anxiety about their lodgings, the cure of the wounded, and the health of the army, to which he received only unpleasing answers. To some of his counselors, apart, he said, "Were it not for our vow, we would relinquish this purpose till spring, when our poor soldiers might take the field with less of suffering."

Nothing else remarkable appeared in the Duke's manner, save that he inquired repeatedly after Campo-basso, and at length received accounts that he was indisposed, and that his physician had recommended rest; he had therefore retired to repose himself, in order that he might be stirring on his duty at peep of day, the safety of the camp depending much on his vigilance.

The Duke made no observation on the apology, which he considered as indicating some lurking disinclination on the Italian's part to meet Oxford. The guests at the ducal pavilion were dismissed an hour before midnight.

When Oxford and his son were in their own tent, the Earl fell into a deep reverie, which lasted nearly ten minutes. At length, starting suddenly up, he said, "My son, give orders to Thiebault and thy yeomen to have our horses before the tent by break of day, or rather before it; and it would not be amiss if you ask our neighbor Colvin to ride along with us. I will visit the outposts by daybreak."

"It is a sudden resolution, my lord," said Arthur.

"And yet it may be taken too late," said his father. "Had it been moonlight, I would have made the rounds to-night."

"It is dark as a wolf's throat," said Arthur. "But wherefore, my lord, can this night in particular excite your apprehensions?"

"Son Arthur, perhaps you will hold your father credulous. But my nurse, Martha Nixon, was a Northern woman, and full of superstitions. In particular, she was wont to say that any sudden and causeless change of a man's nature,

as from license to sobriety, from temperance to indulgence, from avarice to extravagance, from prodigality to love of money, or the like, indicates an immediate change of his fortunes; that some great alteration of circumstances, either for good or evil, and for evil most likely, since we live in an evil world, is impending over him whose disposition is so much altered. This old woman's fancy has recurred so strongly to my mind, that I am determined to see with mine own eyes, ere to-morrow's dawn, that all our guards and patrols around the camp are on the alert."

Arthur made the necessary communications to Colvin and to Thiebault, and then retired to rest.

It was ere daybreak of the first of January 1477, a period long memorable for the events which marked it, that the Earl of Oxford, Colvin, and the young Englishman, followed only by Thiebault and two other servants, commenced their rounds of the Duke of Burgundy's encampment. For the greater part of their progress, they found sentinels and guards all on the alert and at their posts. It was a bitter morning. The ground was partly covered with snow, that snow had been partly melted by a thaw, which had prevailed for two days, and partly congealed into ice by a bitter frost, which had commenced the preceding evening and still continued. A more dreary scene could scarcely be witnessed.

But what were the surprise and alarm of the Earl of Oxford and his companions, when they came to that part of the camp which had been occupied the day before by Campo-basso and his Italians, who, reckoning men-at-arms and Stradiots, amounted to nigh two thousand men—not a challenge was given—not a horse neighed—no steeds were seen at picquet—no guard on the camp. They examined several of the tents and huts—they were empty.

"Let us back to alarm the camp," said the Earl of Oxford; "here is treachery."

"Nay, my lord," said Colvin, "let us not carry back imperfect tidings. I have a battery an hundred yards in advance, covering the access to this hollow way; let us see if my German cannoneers are at their post, and I think I can swear that we shall find them so. The battery commands a narrow pass, by which alone the camp can be approached, and if my men are at their duty, I will pawn my life that we make the pass good till you bring up succors from the main body."

"Forward, then, in God's name!" said the Earl of Oxford.

They galloped, at every risk, over broken ground, slippery with ice in some places, encumbered with snow in others. They came to the cannon, judiciously placed to sweep the pass, which rose towards the artillery on the outward side, and then descended gently from the battery into the lower ground. The waning winter moon, mingling with the dawning light, showed them that the guns were in their places, but no sentinel was visible.

"The villains cannot have deserted!" said the astonished Colvin. "But see, there is light in their cantonment. Oh, that unhallowed distribution of wine! Their usual sin of drunkenness has beset them. I will soon drive them from their revelry."

He sprung from his horse, and rushed into the tent from whence the light issued. The cannoneers, or most of them, were still there, but stretched on the ground, their cups and flagons scattered around them; and so drenched were they in wassail, that Colvin could only, by commands and threats, awaken two or three, who, staggering, and obeying him rather from instinct than sense, reeled forward to man the battery. A heavy rushing sound, like that of men marching fast, was now heard coming up the pass.

"It is the roar of a distant avalanche," said Arthur.

"It is an avalanche of Switzers, not of snow," said Colvin. "Oh, these drunken slaves! The cannon are deeply loaded and well pointed; this volley must check them if they were fiends, and the report will alarm the camp sooner than we can do. But, oh, these drunken villains!"

"Care not for their aid," said the Earl: "my son and I will each take a linstock, and be gunners for once."

They dismounted, and bade Thiebault and the grooms look to the horses, while the Earl of Oxford and his son took each a linstock from one of the helpless gunners, three of whom were just sober enough to stand by their guns.

"Bravo!" cried the bold master of ordnance, "never was a battery so noble. Now, my mates—your pardon, my lords, for there is no time for ceremony—and you, ye drunken knaves, take heed not to fire till I give the word, and, were the ribs of these tramplers are flinty as their Alps, they shall know how old Colvin loads his guns."

They stood breathless, each by his cannon. The dreaded sound approached nearer and more near, till the imperfect light showed a dark and shadowy, but dense, column of men, armed with long spears, pole-axes, and other weapons, amidst which banners dimly floated. Colvin suffered them to ap-

proach to the distance of about forty yards, and then gave the word, "Fire!" But his own piece alone exploded; a slight flame flashed from the touch-hole of the others, which had been spiked by the Italian deserters, and left in reality disabled, though apparently fit for service. Had they been all in the same condition with that fired by Colvin, they would probably have verified his prophecy; for even that single discharge produced an awful effect, and made a long lane of dead and wounded through the Swiss column, in which the first and leading banner was struck down.

"Stand to it yet," said Colvin, "and aid me if possible to reload the piece."

For this, however, no time was allowed. A stately form, conspicuous in the front of the staggered column, raised up the fallen banner, and a voice as of a giant exclaimed, "What, countrymen! have you seen Murten and Granson, and are you daunted by a single gun? Berne—Uri—Schwytz—banners forward! Unterwalden, here is your standard! Cry your war-cries, wind your horns. Unterwalden, follow your Landamman!"

They rushed on like a raging ocean, with a roar as deafening and a course as impetuous. Colvin, still laboring to reload his gun, was struck down in the act. Oxford and his son were overthrown by the multitude, the closeness of which prevented any blows being aimed at them. Arthur partly saved himself by getting under the gun he was posted at; his father, less fortunate, was much trampled upon, and must have been crushed to death but for his armor of proof. The human inundation, consisting of at least four thousand men, rushed down into the camp, continuing their dreadful shouts, soon mingled with shrill shrieks, groans and cries of alarm.

A broad red glare rising behind the assailants, and putting to shame the pallid lights of the winter morning, first recalled Arthur to a sense of his condition. The camp was on fire in his rear, and resounded with all the various shouts of conquest and terror that are heard in a town which is stormed. Starting to his feet, he looked around him for his father. He lay near him senseless, as were the gunners, whose condition prevented their attempting an escape. Having opened his father's casque, he was rejoiced to see him give symptoms of reanimation.

"The horses—the horses!" said Arthur. "Thiebault, where art thou?"

"At hand, my lord," said that trusty attendant, who had

saved himself and his charge by a prudent retreat into a small thicket, which the assailants had avoided that they might not disorder their ranks.

"Where is the gallant Colvin?" said the Earl; "get him a horse, I will not leave him in jeopardy."

"His wars are ended, my lord," said Thiebault: "he will never mount steed more."

A look and a sigh as he saw Colvin, with the ramrod in his hand, before the muzzle of the piece, his head cleft by a Swiss battle-ax, was all the moment permitted.

"Whither must we take our course?" said Arthur to his father.

"To join the Duke," said the Earl of Oxford. "It is not on a day like this that I will leave him."

"So please you," said Thiebault, "I saw the Duke, followed by some half-score of his guards, riding at full speed across this hollow watercourse, and making for the open country to the northward. I think I can guide you on the track."

"If that be so," replied Oxford, "we will mount and follow him. The camp has been assailed on several places at once, and all must be over since he has fled."

With difficulty they assisted the Earl of Oxford to his horse, and rode as fast as his returning strength permitted in the direction which the Provençal pointed out. Their other attendants were dispersed or slain.

They looked back more than once on the camp, now one great scene of conflagration, by whose red and glaring light they could discover on the ground the traces of Charles's retreat. About three miles from the scene of their defeat, the sound of which they still heard, mingled with the bells of Nancy, which were ringing in triumph, they reached a half-frozen swamp, round which lay several dead bodies. The most conspicuous was that of Charles of Burgundy,* once the possessor of such unlimited power, such unbounded wealth. He was partly stripped and plundered, as were those who lay round him. His body was pierced with several wounds, inflicted by various weapons. His sword was still in his hand, and the singular ferocity which was wont to animate his features in battle still dwelt on his stiffened countenance. Close behind him, as if they had fallen in the act of mutual fight, lay the corpse of Count Albert of Geierstein; and that of Ital Schreckenwald, the faithful though

* See Charles the Bold. Note 12.

unscrupulous follower of the latter, lay not far distant. Both were in the dress of the men-at-arms composing the Duke's guard, a disguise probably assumed to execute the fatal commission of the Secret Tribunal. It is supposed that a party of the traitor Campo-basso's men had been engaged in the skirmish in which the Duke fell, for six or seven of them, and about the same number of the Duke's guards, were found near the spot.

The Earl of Oxford threw himself from his horse, and examined the body of his deceased brother-in-arms with all the sorrow inspired by early remembrance of his kindness. But, as he gave way to the feelings inspired by so melancholy an example of the fall of human greatness, Thiebault, who was looking out on the path they had just pursued, exclaimed, "To horse, my lord! here is no time to mourn the dead, and little to save the living—the Swiss are upon us."

"Fly thyself, good fellow," said the Earl; "and do thou, Arthur, fly also, and save thy youth for happier days. I cannot and will not fly farther. I will render me to the pursuers; if they take me to grace, it is well; if not, there is ONE above that will receive me to His."

"I will not fly," said Arthur, "and leave you defenseless: I will stay and share your fate."

"And I will remain also," said Thiebault; "the Switzers make fair war when their blood has not been heated by much opposition, and they have had little enough to-day."

The party of Swiss which came up proved to be Sigismund, with his brother Ernest and some of the youths of Unterwalden. Sigismund kindly and joyfully received them to mercy; and thus, for the third time, rendered Arthur an important service, in return for the kindness he had expressed towards him.

"I will take you to my father," said Sigismund, "who will be right glad to see you; only that he is ill at ease just now for the death of brother Rudiger, who fell with the banner in his hand, by the only cannon that was fired this morning; the rest could not bark: Campo-basso had muzzled Colvin's mastiffs, or we should many more of us have been served like poor Rudiger. But Colvin himself is killed."

"Campo-basso, then, was in your correspondence?" said Arthur.

"Not in ours—we scorn such companions—but some dealing there was between the Italian and Duke Ferrand; and having disabled the cannon, and filled the German gunners

soundly drunk, he came off to our camp with fifteen hundred horse, and offered to act with us. "But no—no!" said my father, "traitors come not into our Swiss host"; and so, though we walked in at the door which he left open, we would not have his company. So he marched with Duke Ferrand to attack the other extremity of the camp, where he found them entrance by announcing them as the return of a reconnoitering party."

"Nay, then," said Arthur, "a more accomplished traitor never drew breath, nor one who drew his net with such success."

"You say well," answered the young Swiss. "The Duke will never, they say, be able to collect another army."

"Never, young man," said the Earl of Oxford, "for he lies dead before you."

Sigismund started; for he had an inherent respect, and somewhat of fear, for the lofty name of Charles the Bold, and could hardly believe that the mangled corpse which now lay before him was once the personage he had been taught to dread. But his surprise was mingled with sorrow when he saw the body of his uncle, Count Albert of Geierstein.

"Oh, my uncle," he said—"my dear uncle Albert! has all your greatness and your wisdom brought you to a death at the side of a ditch, like any crazed beggar? Come, this sad news must be presently told to my father, who will be concerned to hear of his brother's death, which will add gall to bitterness, coming on the back of poor Rudiger's. It is some comfort, however, that father and uncle never could abide each other."

With some difficulty they once more assisted the Earl of Oxford to horseback, and were proceeding to set forward, when the English lord said, "You will place a guard here, to save these bodies from farther dishonor, that they may be interred with due solemnity."

"By Our Lady of Einsiedlen! I thank you for the hint," said Sigismund. "Yes, we should do all that the church can for uncle Albert. It is to be hoped he has not gambled away his soul beforehand, playing with Satan at odds and evens. I would we had a priest to stay by his poor body; but it matters not, since no one ever heard of a demon appearing just before breakfast."

They proceeded to the Landamman's quarters, through sights and scenes which Arthur, and even his father, so well accustomed to war in all its shapes, could not look upon without shuddering. But the simple Sigismund, as he

walked by Arthur's side, contrived to hit upon a theme so interesting as to divert his sense of the horrors around them.

"Have you farther business in Burgundy, now this Duke of yours is at an end?"

"My father knows best," said Arthur; "but I apprehend we have none. The Duchess of Burgundy, who must now succeed to some sort of authority in her late husband's dominion, is sister to this Edward of York, and a mortal enemy to the house of Lancaster, and to those who have stood by it faithfully. It were neither prudent nor safe to tarry where she has influence."

"In that case," said Sigismund, "my plan will fadge bravely. You shall go back to Geierstein, and take up your dwelling with us. Your father will be a brother to mine, and a better one than uncle Albert, whom he seldom saw or spoke with; while with your father he will converse from morning till night, and leave us all the work of the farm. And you, Arthur—you shall go with us, and be a brother to us all, in place of poor Rudiger, who was, to be sure, my real brother, which you cannot be. Nevertheless, I did not like him so well, in respect he was not so good-natured. And then Anne—cousin Anne—is left all to my father's charge, and is now at Geierstein; and you know, King Arthur, we used to call her Queen Guenever."

"You spoke great folly then," said Arthur.

"But it is great truth. For, look you, I loved to tell Anne tales of our hunting, and so forth; but she would not listen a word till I threw in something of King Arthur, and then I warrant she would sit still as a heath-hen when the hawk is in the heavens. And now Donnerhugel is slain, you know you may marry my cousin when you and she will, for nobody hath interest to prevent it."

Arthur blushed with pleasure under his helmet, and almost forgave that new year's morning all its complicated distresses.

"You forget," he replied to Sigismund, with as much indifference as he could assume, "that I may be viewed in your country with prejudice on account of Rudolph's death."

"Not a whit—not a whit; we bear no malice for what is done in fair fight under shield. It is no more than if you had beat him in wrestling or at quoits, only it is a game cannot be played over again."

They now entered the town of Nancy; the windows were

hung with tapestry, and the streets crowded with tumultuous and rejoicing multitudes, whom the success of the battle had relieved from great alarm for the formidable vengeance of Charles of Burgundy.

The prisoners were received with the utmost kindness by the Landamman, who assured them of his protection and friendship. He appeared to support the death of his son Rudiger with stern resignation.

"He had rather," he said, "his son fell in battle than that he should live to despise the old simplicity of his country, and think the object of combat was the gaining of spoil. The gold of the dead Burgundy," he added, "would injure the morals of Switzerland more irretrievably than ever his sword did their bodies."

He heard of his brother's death without surprise, but apparently with emotion.

"It was the conclusion," he said, "of a long tissue of ambitious enterprises, which often offered fair prospects, but uniformly ended in disappointment.

The Landamman farther intimated, that his brother had apprised him that he was engaged in an affair of so much danger that he was almost certain to perish in it, and had bequeathed his daughter to her uncle's care, with instructions respecting her.

Here they parted for the present, but shortly after the Landamman inquired earnestly of the Earl of Oxford what his motions were like to be, and whether he could assist them.

"I think of choosing Bretagne for my place of refuge," answered the Earl, "where my wife has dwelt since the battle of Tewkesbury expelled us from England."

"Do not so," said the kind Landamman, "but come to Geierstein with the Countess, where, if she can, like you, endure our mountain manners and mountain fare, you are welcome, as to the house of a brother, to a soil where neither conspiracy nor treason ever flourished. Bethink you, the Duke of Bretagne is a weak prince, entirely governed by a wicked favorite, Peter Landais. He is as capable—I mean the minister—of selling brave men's blood as a butcher of selling bullock's flesh ; and you know there are those, both in France and Burgundy, that thirst after yours."

The Earl of Oxford expressed his thanks for the proposal, and his determination to profit by it, if approved of by Henry of Lancaster, Earl of Richmond, whom he now regarded as his sovereign.

To close the tale, about three months after the battle of Nancy, the banished Earl of Oxford resumed his name of Philipson, bringing with his lady some remnants of their former wealth, which enabled them to procure a commodious residence near to Geierstein; and the Landamman's interest in the state procured for them the right of denizenship. The high blood and the moderate fortunes of Anne of Geierstein and Arthur de Vere, joined to their mutual inclination, made their marriage in every respect rational; and Annette with her bachelor took up their residence with the young people, not as servants, but mechanical aids in the duties of the farm; for Arthur continued to prefer the chase to the labors of husbandry, which was of little consequence, as his separate income amounted, in that poor country, to opulence. Time glided on, till it amounted to five years since the exiled family had been inhabitants of Switzerland. In the year 1482, the Landamman Biederman died the death of the righteous, lamented universally, as a model of the true and valiant, simple-minded and sagacious chiefs who ruled the ancient Switzers in peace, and headed them in battle. In the same year, the Earl of Oxford lost his noble countess.

But the star of Lancaster at that period began again to culminate, and called the banished lord and his son from their retirement, to mix once more in politics. The treasured necklace of Margaret was then put to its destined use, and the produce applied to levy those bands which shortly after fought the celebrated battle of Bosworth, in which the arms of Oxford and his son contributed so much to the success of Henry VII. This changed the destinies of De Vere and his lady. Their Swiss farm was conferred on Annette and her husband; and the manners and beauty of Anne of Geierstein attracted as much admiration at the English court as formerly in the Swiss chalet.

NOTES TO ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN

Note 1.—Double-gangers, p. 141

Double-walkers, a name in Germany for those aerial duplicates of humanity who represent the features and appearance of other living persons.

Note 2.—Louis XI.'s Ministers, p. 172

Louis XI. was probably the first king of France who flung aside all affectation of choosing his ministers from among the nobility. He often placed men of mean birth in situations of the highest trust.

Note 3.—German Dungeon, p. 174

In connection with the description of this dungeon, it may be stated that the Author, in composing this novel, derived considerable assistance from a journal of foreign travel, the work of his intimate friend the late James Skene of Rubislaw. It is also curious to observe that in the *Archæologia Scotica*, 1823, vol. iii. p. 17, there appears an account by Mr. Skene of a suite of apartments excavated from the rocks on which the castle of Baden, in Swabia, stands, supposed to have been connected with the jurisdiction of the Secret Tribunal in that country (*Laing*).

Note 4.—Public Executioner, p. 198

There is abundant evidence that in the middle ages the office of public executioner was esteemed highly honorable all over Germany. It still is, in such parts of that country as retain the old custom of execution by stroke of sword, very far from being held discreditable to the extent to which we carry our feelings on the subject, and which exposed the magistrates of a Scotch town, I rather think no less a one than Glasgow, to a good deal of ridicule when they advertised, some few years ago, on occasion of the death of their hangman, that "none but persons of respectable character" need apply for the vacant situation. At this day in China, in Persia, and probably in other Oriental kingdoms, the chief executioner is one of the great officers of state, and is as proud of the emblem of his fatal duty as any European lord chamberlain of his golden key.

The circumstances of the strange trial and execution of the knight of Hagenbach are detailed minutely by M. de Barante from contemporary MS. documents; and the reader will be gratified with a specimen of that writer's narrative. A translation is also given for the benefit of many of my kind readers.

De toutes parts on était accouru par milliers pour assister au procès de ce cruel gouverneur, tant la haine était grande contre lui. De sa prison, il entendait retentir sur le pont, et au-dessous des voûtes de la porte, le pas des chevaux, et s'enquérait à son geôlier de ceux qui arrivaient, soit pour être ses juges, soit pour être témoins de son supplice. Parfois le geôlier répondait, "Ce sont des étrangers; je ne les connais pas." "Ne sont-ce pas," disait le prisonnier, "des gens assez mal vêtus, de haute taille, de forte apparence, montés sur des chevaux aux courtes oreilles?" et si le geôlier répondait, "Oui"—"Ah ce sont les Suisses," s'écriait Hagenbach. "Mon Dieu, ayez pitié de moi!" et il se rappelait toutes les insultes qu'il leur avait faites, toutes ses insolences envers eux. Il pensait, mais trop tard, que c'était leur alliance avec la maison d'Autriche qui était cause de sa perte.

Le 4 Mai 1474, après avoir été mis à la question, il fut, à la diligence d'Hermann d'Eptingen, gouverneur pour l'archiduc, amené devant ses juges, sur la place publique de Brisach. Sa contenance était ferme et d'un homme qui ne craint pas la mort. Henri Iselin de Bâle porta la parole au nom d'Hermann d'Eptingen, agissant pour le seigneur et le [du] pays. Il parla à peu près en ces termes: "Pierre de Hagenbach, chevalier, maître d'hôtel de Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne, et son gouverneur dans les pays de Ferette et Haute-Alsace, aurait

dû respecter les priviléges réservés par l'acte d'engagement ; mais il n'a pas moins foulé aux pieds les lois de Dieu et des hommes, que les droits jurés et garantis au pays. Il a fait mettre à mort sans jugement quatre honnêtes bourgeois de Thann ; il a dépouillé la ville de Brisach de sa juridiction, et y a établis juges et consuls de son choix ; il a rompu et dispersé les communautés de la bourgeoisie et des mètiers ; il a levé des impôts par sa seule volonté ; il a, contre toutes les lois, logé chez les habitans des gens de guerre—Lombards, Francais, Picards, ou Flamands ; et a favorisé leurs désordres et pillages. Il leur a même commandé d'égorger leurs hôtes durant la nuit, et avait fait préparer, pour y embarquer les femmes et les enfans, des bateaux qui devaient être submergés dans le Rhin. Enfin, lors même qu'il rejetterait de telles cruautés sur les ordres qu'il a reçus, comment pourrait-il s'excuser d'avoir fait violence et outrage à l'honneur de tant de filles et femmes, et même de saintes religieuses ?"

D'autres accusations furent portées dans les interrogatoires ; et des témoins attestèrent les violences faites aux gens de Mulhausen et aux marchands de Bâle.

Pour suivre toutes les formes de la justice, on avait donné un avocat à l'accusé. "Messire Pierre de Hagenbach," dit-il, "ne reconnaît d'autre juge et d'autre seigneur que Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne, dont il avait commission, et recevait les commandemens. Il n'avait nul droit de contrôler les ordres qu'il était chargé d'exécuter, et son devoir était d'obéir. Ne sait-on pas quelle soumission les gens de guerre doivent à leur seigneur et maître ? Croit-on que le landvogt de Monseigneur le Duc eût à lui remontrer et à lui resister ? Et monseigneur n'a-t-il pas ensuite, par sa présence, confirmé et ratifié tout ce qui avait été fait en son nom ? Si des impôts ont été demandés, c'est qu'il avait besoin d'argent. Pour les recueillir, il a bien fallu punir ceux qui se refusaient à payer. C'est ce que Monseigneur le Duc, et même l'empereur, quand ils sont venus, ont reconnu nécessaire. Le logement des gens de guerre était aussi la suite des ordres du Duc. Quant à la juridiction de Brisach, le landvogt pouvait il souffrir cette résistance ? Enfin dans une affaire si grave, où il y va de la vie, convient-il de produire comme un véritable grief, le dernier dont a parlé l'accusateur ? Parmi ceux qui écoutent, y en a-t-il un seul qui puisse se vanter de ne pas avoir saisi les occasions de se divertir ? N'est-il pas clair que Messire de Hagenbach a seulement profité de la bonne volonté de quelques femmes ou filles ; ou, pour mettre les choses au pis, qu'il n'a exercé d'autre contrainte envers elle qu'au moyen de son bon argent ?"

Les juges siégèrent longtemps sur leur tribunal. Douze heures entières passèrent sans que l'affaire fût terminée. Le Sire de Hagenbach, toujours ferme et calme, n'allégua d'autres défenses, d'autres excuses, que celles qu'il avait données déjà sous la torture—les ordres et la volonté de son seigneur, qui était son seul juge, et le seul qui pût lui demander compte.

Enfin, à sept heures du soir, à la clarté des flambeaux, les juges, après avoir déclaré qu'à eux appartenait le droit de prononcer sur les crimes imputés au landvogt, le firent rappeler, et rendirent leur sentence qui le condamna à mort. Il ne s'émut pas davantage, et demanda pour toute grace d'avoir seulement la tête tranchée. Huit bourreaux des diverses villes se présentèrent pour exécuter l'arrêt. Celui de Colmar, qui passait pour le plus adroit, fut préféré. Avant de le conduire à l'échafaud, les seize chevaliers qui faisaient partie des juges requirent que Messire de Hagenbach fût dégradé de sa dignité de chevalier et de tous ses honneurs. Pour lors s'avança Gaspard Hurter, héraut de l'empereur, et il dit : "Pierre de Hagenbach, il me déplaît grandement que vous ayez si mal employé votre vie mortelle, de sorte qu'il convient que vous perdiez non seulement la dignité et ordre de chevalerie, maif aussi la vie. Votre devoir était de rendre la justice, de protéger la veuve et l'orphelin, de respecter les femmes et les filles, d'honorer les saints prêtres, de vous opposer à toute injuste violence, et, au contraire, vous avez commis tout ce que vous deviez empêcher. Ayant ainsi forfait au noble ordre de chevalerie, et aux sermens que vous aviez jurés, les chevaliers ici preséns m'ont enjoint de vous en ôter les insignes. Ne les voyant pas sur vous en ce moment je vous proclame indigne chevalier de St. George, au nom et à l'honneur duquel on vous avait autrefois honoré du baudrier de chevalerie." Puis s'avança Hermann d'Eptingen : "Puis qu'on vient de te dégrader de chevalerie, je te dépouille de ton collier, chaîne d'or, anneau, poignard, éperon, gantelet." Il les lui prit et lui en frappa le visage, et ajouta : "Chevaliers, et vous qui désirez le devenir, j'espère que cette punition publique vous servira d'exemple, et que vous vivrez dans la crainte de Dieu, noblement et vaillamment, selon la dignité de la chevalerie et l'honneur de votre nom." Enfin, Thomas Schutz, prevôt d'Einsisheim et maréchal de cette commission de juges, se leva, et s'adressant au bourreau, lui dit : "Faites selon la justice."

Tous les juges montèrent à cheval ainsi qu'Hermann d' Eptingen. Au milieu d'eux marchait Pierre de Hagenbach, entre deux prêtres. C'était pendant la nuit. Des torches éclairaient la marche : une foule immense se pressait autour de ce triste cortége. Le condamné s'entretenait avec son confesseur d'un air

pieux et recueilli, mais ferme ; se recommandant aussi aux prières de tous ceux qui l'entouraient. Arrivé dans une prairie devant la porte de la ville, il monta sur l'échafaud d'un pas assuré ; puis élevant la voix—

"Je n'ai pas peur de la mort," dit-il ; "encore que je ne l'attendisse pas de cette sorte, mais bien les armes à la main ; ce que je plains c'est tout le sang que le mien fera couler. Monseigneur ne laissera point ce jour sans vengeance pour moi. Je ne regrette ni ma vie, ni mon corps. . . . J'étais homme—priez pour moi. . . ." Il s'entretint encore un instant avec le confesseur, présenta la tête et recut le coup.—[BRUGIERE DE] BARANTE [*Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne*, x. pp. 189–196].

TRANSLATION

Such was the detestation in which this cruel governor was held, that multitudes flocked in from all quarters to be present at his trial. He heard from his prison the bridge and the archway of the gate re-echo with the tread of horses, and would ask of his jailer respecting those who were arriving, whether they might be his judges, or those desirous of witnessing his punishment. Sometimes the jailer would answer, "These are strangers whom I know not." "Are not they," said the prisoner, "men meanly clad, tall in stature, and of bold mien, mounted on short-eared horses ?" And if the jailer answered in the affirmative, "Ah, these are the Swiss." cried Hagenbach. "My God, have mercy on me !" and he recalled to mind all the insults and cruelties he had heaped upon them. He considered, but too late, that their alliance with the house of Austria had been his destruction.

On the 4th of May 1474, after being put to the torture, he was brought before his judges in the public square of Brisach, at the instance of Hermann d'Eptingen, who governed for the Archduke. His countenance was firm, as one who fears not death. Henry Iselin of Bâle first spoke in the name of Hermann d'Eptingen, who acted for the lord and [of] the country. He proceeded in nearly these terms : "Peter de Hagenbach, knight, steward of my lord the Duke of Burgundy, and his governor in the country of Ferette and Haute-Alsace, was bound to observe the privileges reserved by act of compact, but he has alike trampled under foot the laws of God and man, and the rights which have been guaranteed by oath to the country. He has caused four worshipful burgesses of Thann to be put to death without trial ; he has spoiled the city of Brisach, and established there judges and consuls chosen by himself ; he has broken and dispersed the various communities of burghers and craftsmen ; he has levied imposts of his own will ; contrary to every law, he has quartered upon the inhabitants soldiers of various countries, Lombards, French, men of Picardy, and Flemings, and has encouraged them in pillage and disorder ; he has even commanded these men to butcher their hosts during the night, and had caused boats to be prepared to embark therein women and children to be sunk in the Rhine. Finally, should he plead the orders which he had received as an excuse for these cruelties, how can he clear himself of having dishonored so many women and maidens, even those under religious vows ?"

Other accusations were brought against him by examination, and witnesses proved outrages committed on the people of Mulhausen and the merchants of Bâle.

That every form of justice might be observed, an advocate was appointed to defend the accused. "Messire Peter de Hagenbach," said he, "recognizes no other judge or master than my lord the Duke of Burgundy, whose commission he bore and whose orders he received. He had no control over the orders he was charged to execute : his duty was to obey. Who is ignorant of the submission due by military retainers to their lord and master ? Can any one believe that the landvogt of my lord the Duke could remonstrate with or resist him ? And has not my lord confirmed and ratified by his presence all acts done in his name ? If imposts have been levied, it was because he had need of money ; to obtain it, it was necessary to punish those who refused payment ; this proceeding my lord the Duke, and the Emperor himself, when present, have considered as expedient. The quartering of soldiers was also in accordance with the orders of the Duke. With respect to the jurisdiction of Brisach, could the landvogt permit any resistance from that quarter ? To conclude, in so serious an affair—one which touches the life of the prisoner—can the last accusation be really considered a grievance ? Among all those who hear me, is there one man who can say he has never committed similar imprudences ? Is it not evident that Messire de Hagenbach has only taken advantage of the good-will of some girls and women, or, at the worst, that his money was the only restraint imposed upon them ?"

The judges sat for a long time on the tribunal. Twelve hours elapsed before the termination of the trial. The knight of Hagenbach, always calm and undaunted, brought forward no other defense or excuse than what he had before given when under the torture, viz. the orders and will of his lord, who alone was

his judge, and who alone could demand an explanation. At length at seven in the evening, and by the light of torches, the judges, after having declared it their province to pronounce judgment on the crimes of which the landvogt was accused, caused him to be called before them, and delivered their sentence condemning him to death. He betrayed no emotion, and only demanded as a favor that he should be beheaded. Eight executioners of various towns presented themselves to execute the sentence; the one belonging to Colmar, who was accounted the most expert, was preferred.

Before conducting him to the scaffold, the sixteen knights who acted as judges required that Messire de Hagenbach should be degraded from the dignity of knight, and from all his honors. Then advanced Gaspard Hurter, herald of the Emperor, and said—"Peter de Hagenbach, I deeply deplore that you have so employed your mortal life, that you must lose not only the dignity and honor of knighthood, but your life also. Your duty was to render justice, to protect the widow and orphan, to respect women and maidens, to honor the holy priests, to oppose every unjust outrage; but you have yourself committed what you ought to have opposed in others. Having broken, therefore, the oaths which you have sworn, and having forfeited the noble order of knighthood, the knights here present have enjoined me to deprive you of its insignia. Not perceiving them on your person at this moment, I proclaim you unworthy knight of St. George, in whose name and honor you were formerly admitted in the order of knighthood." Then Hermann d'Eptingen advanced. "Since you are degraded from knighthood, I deprive you of your collar, gold chain, ring, poniard, spur, and gauntlet." He then took them from him, and, striking him on the face, added—"Knights, and you who aspire to that honor, I trust this public punishment will serve as an example to you, and that you will live in the fear of God, nobly and valiantly, in accordance with the dignity of knighthood and the honor of your name." At last the provost of Einsisheim, and marshal of that commission of judges, arose, and addressing himself to the executioner—"Let justice be done."

All the judges, along with Hermann d'Eptingen, mounted on horseback; in the midst of them walked Peter de Hagenbach between two priests. It was night, and they marched by the light of torches; an immense crowd pressed around this sad procession. The prisoner conversed with his confessor with pious, collected, and firm demeanor, recommending himself to the prayers of the spectators. On arriving at a meadow without the gate of the town, he mounted the scaffold with a firm step, and elevating his voice, exclaimed—

"I fear not death, I have always expected it; not, indeed, in this manner, but with arms in my hand. I regret alone the blood which mine will cause to be shed · my lord will not permit this day to pass unavenged. I regret neither my life or body. I was a man—pray for me!" He conversed an instant more with his confessor, presented his head, and received the blow.

Note 5.—"Der Rhein, der Rhein," p. 223

This is one of the best and most popular of the German ditties:—

Der Rhein, der Rhein, gesegnet sei der Rhein.
Da wachsen unsre Reben, etc.

Note 6.—Vehme, p. 252

The word "Vehme" is of uncertain derivation, but was always used to intimate this inquisitorial and secret court. The members were termed *wissenden*, or initiated, answering to the modern phrase of *illuminati*. Mr. Palgrave seems inclined to derive the word "Vehme" from "ehme," *i. e.* law, and he is probably right.

Note 7.—Red Soil, p. 259

The parts of Germany subjected to the operation of the Secret Tribunal were called, from the blood which it spilt, or from some other reason (Mr. Palgrave suggests the ground tincture of the ancient banner of the district), the Red Soil. Westphalia, as the limits of that country were understood in the Middle Ages, which are considerably different from the present boundaries, was the principal theater of the Vehme.

Note 8.—The Troubadours, p. 363

The smoothness of the Provençal dialect, partaking strongly of the Latin, which had been spoken for so many ages in what was called for distinction's sake the Roman province of Gaul, and the richness and fertility of a country

abounding in all that could delight the senses and soothe the imagination, naturally disposed the inhabitants to cultivate the art of poetry, and to value and foster the genius of those who distinguished themselves by attaining excellence in it. Troubadours, that is, "finders" or "inventors," equivalent to the Northern term of "makers," arose in every class, from the lowest to the highest, and success in their art dignified men of the meanest rank, and added fresh honors to those who were born in the patrician file of society. War and love, more especially the latter, were dictated to them by the chivalry of the times as the especial subjects of their verse. Such, too, were the themes of our Northern minstrels. But whilst the latter confined themselves in general to those well-known metrical histories in which scenes of strife and combat mingled with adventures of enchantment, and fables of giants and monsters subdued by valiant champions, such as best attracted the ears of the somewhat duller and more barbarous warriors of northern France, of Britain, and of Germany, the more lively troubadours produced poems which turned on human passion, and on love, affection, and dutiful observance, with which the faithful knight was bound to regard the object of his choice, and the honor and respect with which she was bound to recompense his faithful services.

Thus far it cannot be disputed that the themes selected by the troubadours were those on which poetry is most naturally exerted, and with the best chance of rising to excellence. But it usually happens that, when any one of the fine arts is cultivated exclusively, the taste of those who practise and admire its productions loses sight of nature, simplicity, and true taste, and the artist endeavors to discover, while the public learn to admire, some more complicated system, in which pedantry supersedes the dictates of natural feeling, and metaphysical ingenuity is used instead of the more obvious qualifications of simplicity and good sense. Thus, with the unanimous approbation of their hearers the troubadours framed for themselves a species of poetry describing and inculcating a system of metaphysical affection as inconsistent with nature as the minstrel's tales of magicians and monsters; with this evil to society, that it was calculated deeply to injure its manners and its morals. Every troubadour, or good knight, who took the maxims of their poetical school for his rule, was bound to choose a lady love, the fairest and noblest to whom he had access, to whom he dedicated at once his lyre and his sword, and who, married or single was to be the object to whom his life, words, and actions were to be devoted. On the other hand, a lady thus honored and distinguished was bound, by accepting the services of such a gallant, to consider him as her lover, and on all due occasions to grace him as such with distinguished marks of personal favor. It is true that, according to the best authorities, the intercourse betwixt her lover and herself was to be entirely of a Platonic character, and the loyal swain was not to require, or the chosen lady to grant, anything beyond the favor she might in strict modesty bestow. Even under this restriction, the system was like to make wild work with the domestic peace of families, since it permitted, or rather enjoined, such familiarity betwixt the fair dame and her poetical admirer; and very frequently human passions, placed in such a dangerous situation, proved too strong to be confined within the metaphysical bounds prescribed to them by so fantastic and perilous a system. The injured husbands on many occasions avenged themselves with severity, and even with dreadful cruelty, on the unfaithful ladies, and the musical skill and chivalrous character of the lover proved no protection to his person. But the real spirit of the system was seen in this, that in the poems of the other troubadours, by whom such events are recorded, their pity is all bestowed on the hapless lovers, while, without the least allowance for just provocation, the injured husband is held up to execration.

Note 9.—Parliament of Love, p. 364

In Provence, during the flourishing time of the troubadours, love was esteemed so grave and formal a part of the business of life, that a Parliament or High Court of Love was appointed for deciding such questions. This singular tribunal was, it may be supposed, conversant with more of imaginary than of real suits; but it is astonishing with what cold and pedantic ingenuity the troubadours of whom it consisted set themselves to plead and to decide, upon reasoning which was not less singular and able than out of place, the absurd questions which their own fantastic imaginations had previously devised. There, for example, is a reported case of much celebrity, where a lady, sitting in company with three persons who were her admirers, listened to one with the most favorable smiles, while she pressed the hand of the second, and touched with her own the foot of the third. It was a case much agitated and keenly contested in the Parliament of Love which of these rivals had received the distinguishing mark of the lady's favor. Much ingenuity was wasted on this and similar cases, of which there is a collection, in all judicial form of legal proceedings, under the title of *arrets d'amour* (adjudged cases of the Court of Love).

Note 10.—Head of the Vehmic Tribunals, p. 415

The Archbishop of Cologne was recognized as head of all the free tribunals (*i.e.* the Vehmique benches) in Westphalia, by a writ of privilege granted in 1353 by the Emperor Charles IV. Winceslaus confirmed this act by a privilege dated 1382, in which the archbishop is termed Grand Master of the Vehme, or Grand Inquisitor. And this prelate and other priests were encouraged to exercise such office by Pope Boniface III., whose ecclesiastical discipline permitted them in such cases to assume the right of judging in matters of life and death.

Note 11.—Guantes, p. 438

Guantes, used by the Spanish as the French say *etrennes*, or the English hand sell or luckpenny—phrases used by inferiors to their patrons as the bringers of good news.

Note 12.—Charles the Bold, p. 456

The following very striking passage is that in which Philip de Comines sums up the last scene of Charles the Bold, whose various fortunes he had long watched with a dark anticipation that a character so reckless, and capable of such excess, must sooner or later lead to a tragical result :—

As soon as the Count de Campo-basso arrived in the Duke of Lorrain's army, word was sent him to leave the camp immediately, for they would not entertain, nor have any communication with, such traitors. Upon which message he retir'd with his party to Conde, a castle and pass not far off, where he fortified himself with carts and other things as well as he could, in hopes that, if the Duke of Burgundy was routed, he might have an opportunity of coming in for share of the plunder, as he did afterwards. Nor was this practise with the Duke of Lorrain the most execrable action that Campo-bass was guilty of ; but before he left the army he conspir'd with several other officers (finding it was impracticable to attempt anything against the Duke of Burgundy's person) to leave him just as they came to charge for at that time he suppos'd it would put the Duke into the greatest terror and consternation, and if he fled, he was sure he could not escape alive, for he had order'd thirteen or fourteen sure men, some to run as soon as the Germans came up to charge 'em, and others to watch the Duke of Burgundy, and kill him in the rout, which was well enough contrived ; I myself have seen two or three of those who were employed to kill the Duke. Having thus settled his conspiracy at home, he went over to the Duke of Lorrain upon the approach of the German army ; but finding they would not entertain him, he retired to Conde.

The German army march'd forward, and with 'em a considerable body of French horse, whom the King had given leave to be present at that action. Several parties lay in ambush not far off, that if the Duke of Burgundy was routed, they might surprise some person of quality, or take some considerable booty. By this every one may see into what a deplorable condition this poor Duke had brought himself by his contempt of good counsel. Both armies being join'd, the Duke of Burgundy's forces having been twice beaten before, and by consequence weak and dispirited, and ill provided besides, were quickly broken and entirely defeated. Many sav'd themselves and got off ; the rest were either taken or kill'd ; and among 'em the Duke of Burgundy himself was kill'd on the spot. . . . One Monsieur Claude of Bausmont, captain of the Castle of Dier in Lorrain, kill'd the Duke of Burgundy. Finding his army routed, he mounted a swift horse, and endeavoring to swim a little river in order to make his escape, his horse fell with him, and overset him. The Duke cry'd out for quarter to this gentleman who was pursuing him, but he being deaf, and not hearing him, immediately kill'd and stripp'd him, not knowing who he was, and left him naked in the ditch, where his body was found the next day after the battle ; which the Duke of Lorrain (to his eternal honor) buried with great pomp and magnificence in St. George's church, in the old town of Nancy, himself and all his nobility, in deep mourning, attending the corpse to the grave. The following epitaph was some time afterwards engrav'd on his tomb :—

Carolus hoc busto Burgundæ gloria gentis
Conditur, Europæ qui fuit ante timor. . . .

I saw a seal ring of his, since his death, at Milan, with his arms cut curiously upon a sardonyx that I have seen him often wear in a riband at his breast which, was sold at Milan for two ducats, and had been stolen from him by a rascal that waited on him in his chamber. I have often seen the Duke dress'd and undress'd in great state and formality, and attended by very great persons ; but at his

death all this pomp and magnificence ceas'd, and his family was involv'd in the same ruin with himself . . . and very likely as a punishment for his having deliver'd up the Constable not long before, out of a base and avaricious principle; but God forgive him. I have known him a powerful and honorable prince, in as great esteem, and as much courted by his neighbors (when his affairs were in a prosperous condition), as any prince in Europe, and perhaps more; and I cannot conceive what should provoke God Almighty's displeasure so highly against him, unless it was his self-love and arrogance, in appropriating all the success of his enterprises, and all the renown he ever acquir'd, to his own wisdom and conduct, without attributing anything to God. Yet, to speak truth, he was master of several good qualities. No prince ever had a greater ambition to entertain young noblemen than he, nor was more careful of their education. His presents and bounty were never profuse and extravagant, because he gave to many, and had a mind everybody should taste of it. No prince was ever more easy of access to his servants and subjects. Whilst I was in his service he was never cruel, but a little before his death he took up that humor, which was an unfallible sign of the shortness of his life. He was very splendid and curious in his dress, and in everything else, and indeed a little too much. He paid great honors to all ambassadors and foreigners, and entertain'd them nobly. His ambitious desire of fame was insatiable, and it was that which induced him to be eternally in wars, more than any other motive. He ambitiously desir'd to imitate the old kings and heroes of antiquity, whose actions still shine in history, and are so much talked of in the world, and his courage was equal to any prince's of his time.

But all his designs and imaginations were vain and extravagant, and turn'd afterwards to his own dishonor and confusion, for 'tis the conquerors and not the conquer'd that purchase to themselves renown. I cannot easily determine towards whom God Almighty show'd His anger most, whether towards him who died suddenly without pain or sickness in the field of battle, or towards his subjects who never enjoy'd peace after his death, but were continually involv'd in wars, against which they were not able to maintain themselves, upon account of the civil dissentions and cruel animosities that arose among 'em; and that which was the most insupportable was, that the very people to whom they were now oblig'd for their defence and preservation were the Germans, who were strangers, and not long since their profess'd enemies. In short, after the Duke's death, there was not a neighboring state that wish'd them to prosper, nor even Germany that defended 'em. And by the management of their affairs, their understanding seem'd to be as much infatuated as their master's, for they rejected all good counsel, and pursued such methods as directly tended to their destruction; and they are still in such a condition, that though they have at present some little ease and relaxation from their sorrows, yet 'tis with great danger of a relapse, and 'tis well if it turns not in the end to their utter ruin.

I am partly of their opinion who maintain, that God gives princes, as He in His wisdom thinks fit, to punish or chastise the subjects; and He disposes the affection of subjects to their princes, as He has determin'd to raise or depress 'em. Just so it has pleas'd Him to deal with the house of Burgundy; for, after a long series of riches and prosperity, and six-and-twenty years' peace under three illustrious princes, predecessors to this Charles (all of 'em excellent persons, and of great prudence and discretion), it pleas'd God to send this Duke Charles, who involv'd them in bloody wars, as well winter as summer, to their great affliction and expense, in which most of their richest and stoutest men were either kill'd or utterly undone. Their misfortunes began at the siege of Nuz, and so continu'd for three or four battles successively to the very hour of his death; and after such a manner, that at the last the whole strength of their country was destroy'd, and all kill'd or taken prisoners who had any zeal or affection for the house of Burgundy, and had power to defend the state and dignity of that family; so that in a manner their losses were equal to, if not over-balanc'd, their former prosperity; for as I have seen these princes heretofore puissant, rich, and honorable, so it fared the same with their subjects; for I think I have seen and known the greatest part of Europe; yet I never knew any province or country, tho' perhaps of a larger extent, so abounding in money, so extravagantly fine in furniture for their horses, so sumptuous in their buildings, so profuse in their expenses, so luxurious in their feasts and entertainments, and so prodigal in all respects, as the subjects of these princes, in my time . . . but it has pleased God at one blow to subvert and ruin this powerful and illustrious family. . . . Such changes and revolutions of states and kingdoms God in His providence has wrought before we were born, and will do again when we are in our graves: for this is a certain maxim, that the prosperity or adversity of princes are wholly at His disposal.—COMINES, Book V. chap. ix.

GLOSSARY

OF

WORDS, PHRASES, AND ALLUSIONS

Abye, to pay the penalty of, atone for
Adjected, appended, added
Agnes, Queen (p. 159), wife of King Andrew of Hungary, and daughter of the (Emperor) Albert, took inhuman vengeance on her father's murderers
Aigrette, a plume of feathers
Albert, Emperor, more correctly *King of the Romans*, was assassinated by his nephews and other conspirators near Habsburg in Switzerland in 1308
Almain, or *Allemagne*, Germany
Alter ego, second self
Ariette, a little song
Arquebusier, a soldier armed with an arquebuse, an early form of musket
Arrests of love, decrees of the troubadour courts of love. *See* Note 9, p. 467
Asi, or *Æsir*, a class of gods in ancient Scandinavian mythology
Asses, Festival of. See Festival of Asses
Astucious, astute, shrewd
Au secret, for a confidential consultation
Ave, Ave Maria, Hail to thee, Mary! A prayer beginning with these words

Baarenhauter, correctly, *Bärenhäuter*, a "bear's-hider," a nickname given to the *lanzknechte*, or *landsknechte*, at the time of the Thirty Years War, from their fondness for lying stretched at lazy ease on a bear-skin or similar rug
Banneret, a standard-bearer
Ban of the Empire, sentence of outlawry; authority
Banquette, the walk behind the parapet of a fortress
Barante, A. G. P. Brugière, Baron de, author of *Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne*, 12 vols. (1824–28)
Barber, Louis XI.'s *Compare* Oliver le Dain in *Quentin Durward*
Barbican, the outwork defending the gate of a fortress
Baron of the Empire, a baron who owed no allegiance to any feudal superior except the emperor
Bartizan, a small overhanging turret, projecting parapet
Bean in the cake. He who obtained the bean, previously placed in the Twelfth Night cake, was Twelfth Night King
Benedicite, my blessing rest upon you
Berchtold of Offringen (p. 159), a soldier and hermit, who establish his cell near the spot where Albert (*q. v.*) was slain
Bickering, quivering, rapidly fluttering
Black friars of St. Francis's order. See St. Francis's order
Blink out of, to evade, shirk
Blutacker. See Steinernherz, Francis, etc.
Boreas, in ancient Greek mythology, the North Wind
Botargo, the roe of the mullet or tunny, salted and dried
Both Sicilies. See Sicilies both
Bowyer, a maker of bows
Boy bishop, consecration of (p. 379), an annual mummery in most English cathedral towns, on St. Nicholas's Day (6th December), a boy bishop being elected in mockery of the clergy
Brache, a kind of sporting dog, that hunted by scent
Bransle, a brawl, species of dance, resembling the cotillon
Bretagne, Brittany
Broad-piece, an old English gold coin = 20s., first issued by James I. in 1619
Brockenberg, or *Brocken Hill*, a summit in the *Harz* Mountains of Germany, where the witches were believed to assemble for weird revelry at least once a year
Bruit, rumor
Bull, wild, called in Latin *urus*, whence Uri (*see* p. 189)
Buon campagna, open country
Buttisholz, near to Russwyl (*q. v.*) in the canton of Lucerne

Cabaret, a wine-shop
Cabestaing, William, a troubadour of Roussillon, who lived in the end of the 12th century
Caleçons, drawers
Candia, or *Crete*, was at the date of this novel a possession of Venice; nearly all the Levant, except this island and Rhodes (*q. v.*) was subject to the Turks
Capote, a long shaggy overcoat
Caravansera, an inn

Carbonado, a piece of meat or game, seasoned and broiled
Carcanet, a necklace, circlet of jewels
Carolus hoc busto, etc. (p. 468). In this tomb is embalmed Charles, the glory of the Burgundian nation, formerly the terror of Europe
Carthusian friars, take, amongst other vows, one of almost total silence
Cathay, China
Caurus in ancient Greek mythology, the West-North-West Wind
Chaffron, or *chamfron* the armoured frontlet of a horse
Chalumeau, a reed made into an instrument of music
Charles the Simple, a feeble puppet-king of France, who reigned in the end of the 9th and beginning of the 10th century
Clarence and his father-in-law (p. 317). George Duke of Clarence, brother of Edward IV., married Isabella, daughter of Warwick the Kingmaker. Clarence and Warwick went over to Henry VI.; but the duke soon abandoned his father-in-law and returned to join his brother
Coif, a woman's headdress
Corso, the chief street or square in an Italian town
Côte rôti, wine grown on a sunny slope
Couci, *Ingelram de*, or *Enguerrand* VII., married Isabella, a daughter of Edward III. of England, and in 1374–75 claimed certain Swiss territories as belonging to the dowry of his mother, an Austrian princess
Cour plénière, a great gathering of all a king's vassals
Cousie-Archers, associates, used contemptuously
Credo, the Apostles' (or other) Creed
Cresset, a large kind of candlestick for holding a small fire or illuminant

Dalmatic, *dalmatique*, a long ecclesiastical robe
Deo gratias, To God be the thanks
"*Der Rhein der Rhein*," etc. (p. 466). The Rhine, the Rhine, blessed be the Rhine. There grow our noble grapes, etc.
Diensttag, serving-day, Tuesday
Diet, the national assembly
Dijon (p. 300), is more than 100 miles from Strasburg as the crow flies, and lies south-west from Bâle, whereas Strasburg lies north from Bâle
Dingstag, court-day, Tuesday
Dom Daniel, in Oriental lore, a huge cavern supposed to lie "under the roots of the ocean," in which evil spirits, enchanters, and other wicked beings are confined
Doomsmen, all who gathered at the doom, or geat popular court
Dorff, correctly *Dorf*, a village
Double-ganger, or *doppelgänger*, a spectral counterpart of a living person
Ducat, an old gold coin, worth about 9s. 4d.

Échevin, sheriff, assessor
Einsiedlen, or *Einsiedln*, a celebrated Benedictine abbey, a few miles south of the Lake of Zurich
Empire ban of. See Ban of the Empire
Entrechat, a caper
Eresburgh, an old frontier fortress or fortified camp of the ancient Saxons, about 18 miles south of Paderborn
Escossais, Scotsmen
Espadon, a long heavy sword
Étrennes, a free gift, earnest-money
Eurus, in ancient Greek mythology, the East Wind

Fadge, to succeed, fit, turn out well
Faustrecht, club-law, the right claimed by the petty barons of the Empire to wage private warfare
Ferette La, a district or county in southern Alsace
Festival of Asses, celebrated on 14th January, in commemoration of the Flight into Egypt of Joseph and Mary
Fête-Dieu, a five-days' festival, consisting of processions, spectacles, games, etc., first arranged by King René in 1462, and celebrated annually at Aix
Fiat voluntas tua, Thy will be done
Filles repentées, fallen women
Folterkammer, a torture-chamber
Forest Cantons, Lucerne, Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden, grouped round the Lake of Lucerne
Free cities of the Empire, owed allegiance to no prince or ruler except the emperor
Free count of the Empire, a count who owed allegiance to no feudal superior except the emperor
Freegraves, free counts, judges of the Vehmic tribunals
Freyenbach, near Zurich; there the Confederates were attacked on 22d May 1443 by Austria and Zurich
Freyfeldgericht, free field court
Freygraffschaften, free counties
Freyschoppfen, or *Freischoffen*, free bailiffs, sheriffs
Frohner, a summoner, minor judicial officer

Galilee, a porch or chapel beside a monastery or church, in which the monks received visitors, where processions were formed, penitents stationed, and so forth. *See* Note 25, of *Fair Maid of Perth*
Gau, an administrative district of the German Empire
Gauds, trinkets, ornaments
Gear, business, affair; property, goods
Geierstein, vulture-stone
Gerefa, or *graf*, count, earl
Geysler, or *Gessler*, the bailiff of the Duke of Austria in Switzerland, the oppressive tyrant who figures in the story of William Tell

Graffslust, or *Grafenlust*, means "count's delight"
Grave, a count
Gutter-blooded, of the meanest birth

Hagbut, a musket, arquebuse
Handsel, earnest-money
Hanse, or *Hansa*, an association of trading towns, very powerful on the Baltic and North Sea coasts of Germany
Hauptman, more correctly *hauptmann*, a captain
Heilbronn, an old German town on the Neckar, about 30 miles north of Stuttgart
Heimliche acht, the secret tribunal of the Vehmic institution
Helvetia, the Latin name for Switzerland
Henry V. (p. 307), carried an invading army from England over to France, but not from France into Italy
Hermitage (p. 376), wine grown in a vineyard situated 10 or 11 miles north of Valence, in the southeast of France
Hypocaust, a stove, heating apparatus

"*I have seen the wicked man*," etc. (p. 157). *Compare* Psalm xxxvii. 35, 36
Illuminati, a secret society founded by Adam Weishaupt at Ingolstadt in 1776 for promoting general enlightenment and combating tyranny
Illustrissimo, very illustrous sir
Insouciant, heedless, regardless
Irminsule, or *Irminsaule*, a pillar dedicated to Irmin, an ancient Teutonic deity

Jongleur, a minstrel-poet of Northern France
Joyeuse Entrée, making entry in festal fashion
Joyous science, minstrelsy
Judgment of God, trial by ordeal, such as judicial combat, carrying red-hot iron, etc.
Jungherrn, or *Jungherren*, a general title given to the sons of nobles

King of Gods and Men, the Zeus of the Greeks, Jupiter of the Romans
King of Naples, style of, etc. (p. 311), from *Henry VI.*, Part III. Act. i. sc. 4
Koenigsfeldt, or *Königsfelden*, in the canton of Aargau, about 17 miles northwest of Zurich
Königsstuhl, king's seat, seat of judgment
Kreutzer, or *creutzer*, an old silver or copper coin of Germany, formerly = 1½d.

La Ferette. See Ferette, La
Lammergeier, or *lämmergeier*, the Bearded Vulture, the largest bird of prey of the Old World
Landais, Peter, favorite of Francis II., Duke of Brittany; he was the son of a tailor, and was hanged at Nantes in 1485
Landamman, the chief magistrate in a Swiss canton
Landvogt, a bailiff
Lanzknecht, or *landsknecht*, a German mercenary soldier
Laupen, in the canton of Berne; there the Swiss peasants defeated the neighboring feudal nobles in 1339
Leaguer, a fixed camp, generally fortified or entrenched
Le bon Roi René, good King René
Leumund, general bad reputation
Liege (p. 153), was taken by Charles of Burgundy in 1467, and, after a rising of the citizens, again in 1468, when he treated the people with much severity and cruelty
Loretto, holy house of, a small room traditionally believed to have been the Nazareth home of the Virgin Mary, is reverenced at Loretto near Ancona, on the Adriatic coast of Italy
Los, or *laus*, praise
Losel, a good-for-nothing, worthless fellow
Louis XI., agents of. One of his principal advisers was the ci-devant barber, Oliver le Dain, who figures so prominently in *Quentin Duward*; *Louis XI. poisoned his brother* (p. 317). Louis caused his brother Charles, Duke of Guienne, to be put to death. *See Quentin Durward*, Note 40
Lyme-hound, a large dog, as a bloodhound

Magnifico, your magnificence
Mails, baggage
Mainour, the thing stolen; fact, act
Maire, mayor
Maison du Duc, the ducal palace; *maison du Roy*, the royal palace
Malecredence, mistrust, the condition of not being believed
Menherr, Mr.
Merlin, a kind of hawk, formerly trained to hunt game birds
Mete-wand, measuring-rod
Minnesinger, a poet-minstrel of medieval Germany
Monition, a formal notice requiring the amendment of some offense
Montereau, bridge of (p. 359), there in 1419 John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy, was treacherously slain by the attendants of the Dauphin, son of Charles VI. of France
Montero-cap, a huntsman's cap, provided with flaps for protecting the cheeks
Mont l'Héry (p. 324), fought on 16th July 1465 between Louis XI. on the one part and certain of the great nobles of France on the other
Morat, or *Murten*, about 12 miles from Neufchatel, on the east side of the Lake of Neufchatel
Morgue, the proud, disdainful look of a superior to an inferior
Morisco, a Moor of Spain, Moorish
Mount Hirzel, close to Zurich, stormed by the Confederated Swiss in 1443

Nancy, battle of, was fought, not on 1st, but on 5th, January 1477. The body of Charles the Bold was found on the southwest, not, as p. 456 seems to imply, on the north, of the city
Nazarene, correctly

Nazarite, Samson the Judge of Israel. *See* Numbers vi. 2 and Judges xiii. 5

Nierensteiner, grown at Nierstein, 10 miles south of Mayence, on the Rhine

Nimmersat, means "never satisfied"

Non frater, etc. (p. 258), brother is not safe from brother, nor the guest from his host

Offenbare ding, the open court of the Vehmic institution

Oriflamme, the sacred standard of the kingdom of France, was made of red silk with a flame-like edging, and borne on a gilded pole

Palemon, in Thomson's *Seasons*, Autumn

Par Amours, forbidden love

Pardoner, a licensed seller of papal indulgences

Pavin, or *pavan*, a stately Spanish dance

Pays de Vaud, the country of Vaud, a Swiss canton

Peltry, skins and furs of wild animals

Pennoncelle, a little flag fixed to a lance

Pepys, and his camlet cloak (p. 417). *See* his *Diary*, under date 30th December 1667

Piastre, a silver coin, worth 4s.

Pight, pitched, placed, fixed

Pilatre, Mont, more correctly *Pilatus*, a conspicuous peak beside Lake Lucerne

Plump, a clump, collection

Potz element, a German oath

Public good, war of the (p. 321), waged by the Dukes of Burgundy, Britanny, and other great feudatories of France against Louis XI. *See Quentin Durward*, p. 392

Questionary, a peddler of relics or indulgences

Ram's Alley, now Hare Place, off Fleet Street and near Whitefriars, a resort of thieves and low characters, and noted for its dirty cook-shops

Rebeck, or *rebec*, a musical instrument of the viol class

Red Land, a name given to Westphalia, the peculiar home of the *Vehmgerichte* or Secret Tribunals. These were always most powerful in the west, not the east, of the Empire (p. 250). *See also* Note 7, p. 466

Reiter, a horse-soldier

Rheinthal, the valley of the Rhine

Rhinegrave, count of the Rhine county, a district near Wiesbaden

Rhodes, at the date of this novel, was garrisoned by the Knights Hospitallers of St. John

Rigadoon, a dance with a peculiar hopping step

Ritter, a knight

Roba di guadagno, profitable goods, booty

Roi d'amour, king of love, president of the troubadour courts

Romaunt, a story or tale in verse

Rote, a kind of harp or viol, played by turning a wheel

Roussillon, Margaret de (p. 363), wife of Raymond of Roussillon. After she had partaken of the horrid dish of her lover's heart, she threw herself from a balcony in order to escape the murderous fury of her husband

Rudesheimer, or *Rüdesheimer*, a variety of Rhine wine, grown at Rüdesheim, nearly opposite to Bingen

Russwyl, or *Ruswyl*, in the canton, and west of the city of Lucerne. *See further* p. 46; *also* Buttisholz and Couci, Ingelram de

St. Francis's order black friars of (p. 249). The Franciscan friars wore gray gowns; it was the Dominicans who wore them black

St. Gall, or *Sankt* (p. 56) *Gallen*, in the Swiss canton of St. Gall, a famous seat of learning in the middle ages

St. Jacob, chapel of (p. 56), under the walls of Zurich, where in July 1443 the men of that town were routed by the Confederated Swiss. This must be distinguished from the heroic fight at St. Jacob, outside Bâle, against the French, in August 1444

St. Magnus the Martyr, no doubt the Earl of Orkney, who was assassinated in 1115, hardly the 8th century monk of Füssen and St. Gall

St. Martha and the Dragon. See Tarrasque

St. Nicholas (p. 289), the patron saint of thieves and highway robbers

St. Peter of the Fetters. Compare Acts xii. The chains with which the Apostle was bound were long regarded (at Rome) with almost idolatrous devotion

St. Wendelin, a hermit and swineherd of the district of Treves, in the 7th century

Saltire-wise, two lines crossing one another diagonally like a St. Andrew's cross

Samite, a heavy silk textile

Sanctum sanctorum, the most private apartment

Sapperment der Teufel, a German oath

Scabini, sheriffs, assessors

Schaffhausen, abyss of (p. 255), the falls of the Rhine at Schaffhausen, shortly after it emerges from the Lake of Constance

Scharfgerichter, or *scharfrichter*, executioner

Schlaftrunk, a sleeping-draught

Schöppen, should be written *schöffen*, the initiates of the Vehmgerichte or Vehme

Schwarzbier, black beer

Schwarzreiter, a black rider, German mercenary horse-soldier wearing black uniform

Science, joyous, minstrelsy

Sempach, in the canton of Lucerne; there the Swiss defeated the Austrian nobility in 1386

Seven Sleepers, noble youths of Ephesus, shut up in a cave during the persecution of the Christians by the Roman Emperor Decius, about 250; there they slept until the year 447, when they

awakened for a short period

Sibylline leaf, the oracular or precious saying

Sicilies, both. At different periods between the years 1266 and 1713 the crown of Naples and the crown of Sicily were worn by one and the same ruler, who governed under the title of King of the Two Sicilies

Siddons, Sarah, the great tragic actress (1755–1831)

Stadtholder, an imperial deputy, governor

Stauffacher, one of the champions of Swiss independence, an associate of William Tell

Steinernherz, Francis (Franz) von Blutacker, equivalent in English to Francis Stonyheart of Blood-acre

Stell, to place, fix

Stoup, a drinking-cup

Stradiots, or *Stratiots*, light cavalry recruited in Albania and Morea (Greece)

Strappado, a military punishment: the offender's hands were tied behind his back, then he was lifted up by them to a considerable height, and suddenly let fall

Strickkind, the child of the cord, the prisoner on trial before the Vehmic tribunal

Stube, strictly, a living-room containing a stove (Germ. *ofen*)

Stuhlherr, lord or judge of a Vehmic court

Sundgau, or *Upper Alsace*, the southern division of Alsace

Swabia, an old duchy and division of the German empire, now embraced in Würtemberg, Baden, Bavaria, and Switzerland

Swan, white, sacred to Orpheus, the god of music, and so of minstrelsy

Swiss, spoke in (p. 216), the only language peculiar to Switzerland is the Romansch, spoken in the canton of the Grisons. French, German, and Italian are the languages of the bulk of the people

Switzer, a native of Switzerland

Talliage, a subsidy, tax

Tarasconne, or *Tarascon*, a town on the Rhone, about 15 miles south-west of Avignon

Tarrasque, or *Tarasque*, the name of the dragon which in ancient times terrorised Tarascon, and was driven out and into the Rhone by Martha, sister of Mary Magdalene. King René played the Tarasque in the annual masque in the year 1469

Tête-du-pont, the defensive outwork upon which the drawbridge rested when it was lowered

Thane, one in rank intermediate between a freeman and a great noble

"*The style of King of Naples*," etc. (p. 371), from *Henry VI.*, Part III. Act i. sc. 4

Thou, use of, in Germany (p. 280). Annette Veilchen would almost certainly have used habitually "thou" and "thee" to Anne of Geierstein, they being members of the same family and the period the 15th century; but certainly she would not have used it to a stranger like Arthur Philipson

Tiers état, the third estate or representatives of the people

Tisanne, or *ptisan*, a decoction of barley

Trebizond, Soldan of, a kingdom in the north of Asia Minor, ruled over by a branch of the Imperial Byzantine family of the Comneni for two hundred and fifty years (till 1461)

Treillage, trellis-work

Troubadour, a minstrel-poet of the south of France

Turnpike-stair, a spiral or winding staircase

Uri (p. 189), from *urus*, the Latin name for the wild ox

Usum non habeo, I do not know how to use it

Vade retro, get thee behind

Vail, to doff, lower, take off

Vambrace, the piece of armor that covered the forearm

Verfämbt, condemned by the Vehme, outlawed

Vestiary, a room for keeping vestments

Visne, venue, the district where a law action must be tried

Walloon guard. See Glossary to *Quentin Durward*, "Black Walloons"

Wapentake, an old subdivision of the English counties

Warrand, a defender

Wassail, ale or wine sweetened and flavored with spices; revelry; *wassail-song*, a drinking-song, carousing-song

Wein, wine

Weiked, or *whelked*, marked with ridges like a whelk

Wild Huntsman, a spectral hunter, who sweeps through the air with a spectral train of dogs and evil spirits

Wimple, a shawl worn by women out of doors

Winkelried, Arnold, the hero who, in the battle of Sempach (*q.v.*), gathered up an armful of Austrian spears and buried them in his own bosom, thus opening a path for the Swiss through the close-locked ranks of the enemy

Wissenden, those who know, the initiated

Wroge, or *vrage*, formal reports, presentments

Yungfrau, or *Jungfrau*, a maiden; the title long given to an unmarried lady of noble birth

Yungherren, or *Jungherren* (pl.; sing. *Jungherr*), or *Junker*, a title given to young Germans of noble birth

Zecchin, or *sequin*, a Venetian gold coin, worth 9s to 10s.

Zschokke, Johann H. D., German novelist, who also wrote a *History of the Three Leagues in Switzerland* (1798)

Zurich, war of (1436–50), between that canton and the canton of Schwyz and its allies for the possessions of the last Count of Toggenburg, in which Zurich, who was assisted by Austria, was disastrously beaten

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TALES OF MY LANDLORD

Fourth and Last Series

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY

JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM

SCHOOLMASTER AND PARISH-CLERK OF GANDERCLEUGH

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM, M. A.,

TO THE LOVING READER WISHETH HEALTH AND PROSPERITY

It would ill become me, whose name has been spread abroad by those former collections, bearing this title of *Tales of my Landlord*, and who have, by the candid voice of a numerous crowd of readers, been taught to think that I merit not the empty fame alone, but also the more substantial rewards, of successful pencraft—it would, I say, ill become me to suffer this, my youngest literary babe, and probably at the same time the last child of my old age, to pass into the world without some such modest apology for its defects as it has been my custom to put forth on preceding occasions of the like nature. The world has been sufficiently instructed, of a truth, that I am not individually the person to whom is to be ascribed the actual inventing or designing of the scheme upon which these Tales, which men have found so pleasing, were originally constructed; as also that neither am I the actual workman who, furnished by a skilful architect with an accurate plan, including elevations and directions both general and particular, has from thence toiled to bring forth and complete the intended shape and proportion of each division of the edifice. Nevertheless, I have been indisputably the man who, in placing my name at the head of the undertaking, have rendered myself mainly and principally responsible for its general success. When a ship of war goeth forth to battle with a crew, consisting of sundry foremast-men and various officers, such subordinate persons are not said to gain or lose the vessel which they have manned or attacked, although each was natheless sufficiently active in his own department; but it is forthwith bruited and noised abroad, without further phrase, that Captain Jedediah Cleishbotham hath lost such a seventy-four, or won that which by the united exertions of all thereto

pertaining, is taken from the enemy. In the same manner, shame and sorrow it were if I, the voluntary captain and founder of these adventures, after having upon three divers occasions assumed to myself the emoluments and reputation thereof, should now withdraw myself from the risk of failure proper to this fourth and last outgoing. No! I will rather address my associates in this bottom with the constant spirit of Matthew Prior's heroine:

> Did I but purpose to embark with thee
> On the smooth surface of some summer sea,
> But would forsake the waves, and make the shore,
> When the winds whistle, and the billows roar?

As little, nevertheless, would it become my years and station not to admit without cavil certain errors which may justly be pointed out in these concluding *Tales of my Landlord*—the last, and it is manifest, never carefully revised or corrected, handiwork of Mr. Peter Pattieson, now no more; the same worthy young man so repeatedly mentioned in these Introductory Essays, and never without that tribute to his good sense and talents, nay even genius which his contributions to this my undertaking fairly entitled him to claim at the hands of his surviving friend and patron. These pages, I have said, were the *ultimus labor* of mine ingenious assistant; but I say not, as the great Dr. Pitcairne of his hero, *ultimus atque optimus.* Alas! even the giddiness attendant on a journey on this Manchester railroad is not so perilous to the nerves as that too frequent exercise in the merry-go-round of the ideal world, whereof the tendency to render the fancy confused and the judgment inert hath in all ages been noted, not only by the erudite of the earth, but even by many of the thick-witted Ofelli themselves; whether the rapid pace at which the fancy moveth in such exercitations, where the wish of the penman is to him like Prince Houssain's tapestry, in the Eastern fable, be the chief source of peril, or whether, without reference to this wearing speed of movement, the dwelling habitually in those realms of imagination be as little suited for a man's intellect as to breathe for any considerable space "the difficult air of the mountain top" is to the physical structure of his outward frame, this question belongeth not to me; but certain it is, that we often discover in the works of the foremost of this order of men marks of bewilderment and confusion, such as do not so frequently occur in those of persons to whom

nature hath conceded fancy weaker of wing or less ambitious in flight.

It is affecting to see the great Miguel Cervantes himself, even like the sons of meaner men, defending himself against the critics of the day, who assailed him upon such little discrepancies and inaccuracies as are apt to cloud the progress even of a mind like his, when the evening is closing around it.

"It is quite a common thing," says Don Quixote, "for men who have gained a very great reputation by their writings before they were printed quite to lose it afterwards, or, at least, the greater part. "The reason is plain," answers the Bachelor Carrasco; "their faults are more easily discovered after the books are printed, as being then more read, and more narrowly examined, especially if the author has been much cried up before, for then the severity of the scrutiny is sure to be the greater. Those who have raised themselves a name by their own ingenuity, great poets and celebrated historians, are commonly, if not always, envied by a set of men who delight in censuring the writings of others, though they could never produce any of their own." "That is no wonder," quoth Don Quixote; "there are many divines that would make but very dull preachers, and yet are quick enough at finding faults and superfluities in other men's sermons." "All this is true," says Carrasco, "and therefore I could wish such censurers would be more merciful and less scrupulous, and not dwell ungenerously upon small spots that are in a manner but so many atoms on the face of the clear sun they murmur at. If *aliquando dormitat Homerus*, let them consider how many nights he kept himself awake to bring his noble works to light as little darkened with defects as might be. But, indeed, it may many times happen that what is censured for a fault is rather an ornament, as moles often add to the beauty of a face. When all is said, he that publishes a book runs a great risk, since nothing can be so unlikely as that he should have composed one capable of securing the approbation of every reader." "Sure," says Don Quixote, "that which treats of me can have pleased but few?" "Quite the contrary," says Carrasco; "for as *infinitus est numerus stultorum*, so an infinite number have admired your history. Only some there are who have taxed the author with want of memory or sincerity, because he forgot to give an account who it was that stole Sancho's Dapple, for, that particular is not mentioned there, only we find, by the story, that it was stolen; and yet, by and by, we find him riding the same ass again, without any previous light given us into the matter. Then they say that the author forgot to tell the reader what Sancho did with the hundred pieces of gold he found in the portmanteau in the Sierra Morena, for there is not a word said of them more; and many people have a great mind to know what he did with them; and how he spent them; which is one of the most material points in which the work is defective" [Part II. chap. iii.].

How amusingly Sancho is made to clear up the obscurities

thus alluded to by the Bachelor Carrasco no reader can have forgotten; but there remained enough of similar *lacunæ*, inadvertencies, and mistakes, to exercise the ingenuity of those Spanish critics who were too wise in their own conceit to profit by the good-natured and modest apology of this immortal author.

There can be no doubt that, if Cervantes had deigned to use it, he might have pleaded also the apology of indifferent health, under which he certainly labored while finishing the second part of *Don Quixote*. It must be too obvious that the intervals of such a malady as then affected Cervantes could not be the most favorable in the world for revising lighter compositions, and correcting, at least, those grosser errors and imperfections which each author should, if it were but for shame's sake, remove from his work, before bringing it forth into the broad light of day, where they will never fail to be distinctly seen, nor lack ingenious persons who will be too happy in discharging the office of pointing them out.

It is more than time to explain with what purpose we have called thus fully to memory the many venial errors of the inimitable Cervantes, and those passages in which he has rather defied his adversaries than pleaded his own justification; for I suppose it will be readily granted that the difference is too wide betwixt that great wit of Spain and ourselves to permit us to use a buckler which was rendered sufficiently formidable only by the strenuous hand in which it was placed.

The history of my first publications is sufficiently well known. Nor did I relinquish the purpose of concluding these *Tales of my Landlord*, which had been so remarkably fortunate; but death, which steals upon us all with an inaudible foot, cut short the ingenious young man to whose memory I composed that inscription, and erected, at my own charge, that monument which protects his remains, by the side of the river Gander, which he has contributed so much to render immortal, and in a place of his own selection, not very distant from the school under my care.* In a word, the ingenious Mr. Pattieson was removed from his place.

Nor did I confine my care to his posthumous fame alone, but carefully inventoried and preserved the effects which he left behind him, namely, the contents of his small wardrobe,

* See *Old Mortality*, vol. vi. p. 2, for some circumstances attending this erection.

and a number of printed books of somewhat more consequence, together with certain wofully blurred manuscripts discovered in his repository. On looking these over, I found them to contain two tales called *Count Robert of Paris* and *Castle Dangerous;* but was seriously disappointed to perceive that they were by no means in that state of correctness which would induce an experienced person to pronounce any writing, in the technical language of bookcraft, "prepared for the press." There were not only *hiatus valde deflendi,* but even grievous inconsistencies, and other mistakes, which the penman's leisurely revision, had he been spared to bestow it, would doubtless have cleared away. After a considerate perusal, no question flattered myself that these manuscripts, with all their faults, contained here and there passages which seemed plainly to intimate that severe indisposition had been unable to extinguish altogether the brilliancy of that fancy which the world had been pleased to acknowledge in the creations of *Old Mortality, The Bride of Lammermoor,* and others of these naratives. But I, nevertheless, threw the manuscripts into my drawer, resolving not to think of committing them to the Ballantynian ordeal until I could either obtain the assistance of some capable person to supply the deficiencies and correct errors, so as they might face the public with credit, or perhaps numerous and more serious avocations might permit me to dedicate my own time and labor to that task.

While I was in this uncertainty, I had a visit from a stranger, who was announced as a young gentleman desirous of speaking with me on particular business. I immediately augured the accession of a new boarder, but was at once checked by observing that the outward man of the stranger was, in a most remarkable degree, what mine host of the Sir William Wallace, in his phraseology, calls "seedy." His black coat had seen service; the waistcoat of gray plaid bore yet stronger marks of having encountered more than one campaign; his third piece of dress was an absolute veteran compared to the others; his shoes were so loaded with mud as showed his journey must have been pedestrian; and a gray "maud," which fluttered around his wasted limbs, completed such an equipment as, since Juvenal's days, has been the livery of the poor scholar. I therefore concluded that I beheld a candidate for the vacant office of usher, and prepared to listen to his proposals with the dignity becoming my station; but what was my surprise when I found I had before me, in this rusty student, no less a man than Paul,

the brother of Peter Pattieson, come to gather in his brother's succession, and possessed, it seemed, with no small idea of the value of that part of it which consisted in the productions of his pen.

By the rapid study I made of him, this Paul was a sharp lad, imbued with some tincture of letters, like his regretted brother, but totally destitute of those amiable qualities which had often induced me to say within myself that Peter was, like the famous John Gay—

In wit a man, simplicity a child.

He set little by the legacy of my deceased assistant's wardrobe, nor did the books hold much greater value in his eyes; but he peremptorily demanded to be put in possession of the manuscripts, alleging, with obstinacy, that no definite bargain had been completed between his late brother and me, and at length produced the opinion to that effect of a writer, or man of business—a class of persons with whom I have always chosen to have as little concern as possible.

But I had one defense left, which came to my aid, *tanquam deus ex machinâ.* This rapacious Paul Pattieson could not pretend to wrest the disputed manuscripts out of my possession, unless upon repayment of a considerable sum of money, which I had advanced from time to time to the deceased Peter, and particularly to purchase a small annuity for his aged mother. These advances, with the charges of the funeral and other expenses, amounted to a considerable sum, which the poverty-struck student and his acute legal adviser equally foresaw great difficulty in liquidating. The said Mr. Paul Pattieson, therefore, listened to a suggestion, which I dropped, as if by accident, that, if he thought himself capable of filling his brother's place of carrying the work through the press, I would make him welcome to bed and board within my mansion while he was thus engaged, only requiring his occasional assistance at hearing the more advanced scholars. This seemed to promise a close of our dispute alike satisfactory to all parties, and the first act of Paul was to draw on me for a round sum, under pretense that his wardrobe must be wholly refitted. To this I made no objection, though it certainly showed like vanity to purchase garments in the extremity of the mode, when not only great part of the defunct's habiliments were very fit for a twelvemonth's use, but, as I myself had been, but yesterday as it were, equipped in a becoming new stand of black clothes, Mr. Pattieson would have been welcome to the use of such

of my quondam raiment as he thought suitable, as indeed had always been the case with his deceased brother.

The school, I must needs say, came tolerably on. My youngster was very smart, and seemed to be so active in his duty of usher, if I may so speak, that he even overdid his part therein, and I began to feel myself a cipher in my own school.

I comforted myself with the belief that the publication was advancing as fast as I could desire. On this subject Paul Pattieson, like ancient Pistol, "talked bold words at the bridge," and that not only at our house, but in the society of our neighbors, amongst whom, instead of imitating the retired and monastic manner of his brother deceased, he became a gay visitor, and such a reveler, that in process of time he was observed to villipend the modest fare which had at first been esteemed a banquet by his hungry appetite, and thereby highly displeased my wife, who, with justice, applauds herself for the plentiful, cleanly, and healthy victuals wherewith she maintains her ushers and boarders.

Upon the whole, I rather hoped than entertained a sincere confidence that all was going on well, and was in that unpleasant state of mind which precedes the open breach between two associates who have been long jealous of each other, but are as yet deterred by a sense of mutual interest from coming to an open rupture.

The first thing which alarmed me was a rumor in the village that Paul Pattieson intended, in some little space, to undertake a voyage to the Continent—on account of his health, as was pretented, but, as the same report averred, much more with the view of gratifying the curiosity which his perusal of the classics had impressed upon him than for any other purpose. I was, I say, rather alarmed at this *susurrus,* and began to reflect that the retirement of Mr. Pattieson, unless his loss could be supplied in good time, was like to be a blow to the establishment; for, in truth, this Paul had a winning way with the boys, especially those who were gentle-tempered; so that I must confess my doubts whether, in certain respects, I myself could have fully supplied his place in the school, with all my authority and experience. My wife, jealous, as became her station, of Mr. Pattieson' sintentions, advised me to take the matter up immediately, and go to the bottom at once; and, indeed, I had always found that way answered best with my boys.

Mrs. Cleishbotham was not long before renewing the subject; for, like most of the race of Xantippe, though my

helpmate is a well-spoken woman, she loves to thrust in her oar where she is not able to pull it to purpose. "You are a sharp-witted man, Mr. Cleishbotham," would she observe, "and a learned man, Mr. Cleishbotham, and the schoolmaster of Gandercleuch, Mr Cleishbotham, which is saying all in one word; but many a man almost as great as yourself has lost the saddle by suffering an inferior to get up behind him; and though with the world, Mr. Cleishbotham, you have the name of doing everything, both in directing the school and in this new profitable book line which you have taken up, yet it begins to be the common talk of Gandercleuch, both up the water and down the water, that the usher both writes the dominie's books and teaches the dominie's school. Ay—ay, ask maid, wife, or widow, and she'll tell ye the least gaitling among them all comes to Paul Pattieson with his lesson as naturally as they come to me for their four hours, puir things; and never ane thinks of applying to you aboot a kittle turn, or a crabbed word, or about onything else, unless it were for *licet exire*, or the mending of an auld pen."

Now, this address assailed me on a summer evening, when I was whiling away my leisure hours with the end of a cutty-pipe, and indulging in such bland imagination as the nicotian weed is wont to produce, more especially in the case of studious persons, devoted *musis severioribus*. I was naturally loth to leave my misty sanctuary; and endeavored to silence the clamor of Mrs. Cleishbotham's tongue, which has something in it peculiarly shrill and penetrating.—"Woman," said I, with a tone of domestic authority befitting the occasion, "*res tuas agas*—mind your washings and your wringings, your stuffing and your physicking, or whatever concerns the outward person of the pupils, and leave the progress of their education to my usher, Paul Pattieson, and myself."

"I am glad to see," added the accursed woman (that I should say so!), "that ye have the grace to name him foremost, for there is little doubt that he ranks first of the troop, if ye wad but hear what the neighbors speak—or whisper."

"What do they whisper, thou sworn sister of the Eumenides?" cried I, the irritating *æstrum* of the woman's objurgation totally counterbalancing the sedative effects both of pipe and pot.

"Whisper!" resumed she in her shrillest note. "Why, they whisper loud enough for me, at least, to hear them, that the schoolmaster of Gandercleuch is turned a doited auld

woman, and spends all his time in tippling strong drink with the keeper of the public-house, and leaves school and book-making, and a' the rest o't, to the care of his usher; and, also, the wives in Gandercleuch say, that you have engaged Paul Pattieson to write a new book, which is to beat a' the lave that gaed afore it; and, to show what a sair lift you have o' the job, you didna sae muckle as ken the name o't—no, nor whether it was to be about some heathen Greek or the Black Douglas."

This was said with such bitterness that it penetrated to the very quick, and I hurled the poor old pipe like one of Homer's spears, not in the face of my provoking helpmate, though the temptation was strong, but into the river Gander, which, as is now well known to tourists from the uttermost parts of the earth, pursues its quiet meanders beneath the bank on which the schoolhouse is pleasantly situated; and, starting up, fixed on my head the cocked hat (the pride of Messrs. Grieve and Scott's * repository), and, plunging into the valley of the brook, pursued my way upwards, the voice of Mrs. Cleishbotham accompanying me in my retreat with something like the angry scream of triumph with which the brood-goose pursues the flight of some unmannerly cur or idle boy who has intruded upon her premises, and fled before her. Indeed, so great was the influence of this clamor of scorn and wrath which hung upon my rear, that, while it rung in my ears, I was so moved that I instinctively tucked the skirts of my black coat under my arm, as if I had been in actual danger of being seized on by the grasp of the pursuing enemy. Nor was it till I had almost reached the well-known burial-place, in which it was Peter Pattieson's hap to meet the far-famed personage called Old Mortality, that I made a halt for the purpose of composing my perturbed spirits, and considering what was to be done; for as yet my mind was agitated by a chaos of passions, of which anger was predominant; and for what reason, or against whom, I entertained such tumultuous displeasure, it was not easy for me to determine.

Nevertheless, having settled my cocked hat with becoming accuracy on my well-powdered wig, and suffered it to remain uplifted for a moment to cool my flushed brow, having, moreover, readjusted and shaken to rights the skirts of my black coat, I came into case to answer to my own questions, which, till these maneuvers had been sedately accomplished, I might have asked myself in vain.

* A well-known firm of hatters in Edinburgh (*Laing*).

In the first place, therefore, to use the phrase of Mr. Docket, the writer (that is, the attorney) of our village of Gandercleuch, I became satisfied that my anger was directed against all and sundry, or, in law Latin, *contra omnes mortales*, and more particularly against the neighborhood of Gandercleuch, for circulating reports to the prejudice of my literary talents, as well as my accomplishments as a pedagogue, and transferring the fame thereof to mine own usher. Secondly, against my spouse, Dorothea Cleishbotham, for transferring the said calumnious reports to my ears in a prerupt and unseemly manner, and without due respect either to the language which she made use of or the person to whom she spoke, treating affairs in which I was so intimately concerned as if they were proper subjects for jest among gossips at a christening, where the womankind claim the privilege of worshiping the *Bona Dea* according to their secret female rites. Thirdly, I became clear that I was entitled to respond to any whom it concerned to inquire, that my wrath was kindled against Paul Pattieson, my usher, for giving occasion both for the neighbors of Gandercleuch entertaining such opinions and for Mrs. Cleishbotham disrespectfully urging them to my face, since neither circumstance could have existed without he had put forth sinful misrepresentations of transactions private and confidential, and of which I had myself entirely refrained from dropping any the least hint to any third person.

This arrangement of my ideas having contributed to soothe the stormy atmosphere of which they had been the offspring gave reason a time to predominate, and to ask me, with her calm but clear voice, whether, under all the circumstances, I did well to nourish so indiscriminate an indignation? In fine, on closer examination, the various splenetic thoughts I had been indulging against other parties began to be merged in that resentment against my perfidious usher which, like the serpent of Moses, swallowed up all subordinate objects of displeasure. To put myself at open feud with the whole of my neighbors, unless I had been certain of some effectual mode of avenging myself upon them, would have been an undertaking too weighty for my means, and not unlikely, if rashly grappled withal, to end in my ruin. To make a public quarrel with my wife, on such an account as her opinion of my literary accomplishments, would sound ridiculous; and, besides, Mrs. C. was sure to have all the women on her side, who would represent her as a wife persecuted by her husband

for offering him good advice, and urging it upon him with only too enthusiastic sincerity.

There remained Paul Pattieson, undoubtedly, the most natural and proper object of my indignation, since I might be said to have him in my own power, and might punish him by dismissal, at my pleasure. Yet even vindictive proceedings against the said Paul, however easy to be enforced, might be productive of serious consequences to my own purse; and I began to reflect, with anxiety, that in this world it is not often that the gratification of our angry passions lies in the same road with the advancement of our interest, and that the wise man, the *vere sapiens,* seldom hesitates which of these two he ought to prefer.

I recollected also that I was quite uncertain how far the present usher had really been guilty of the foul acts of assumption charged against him.

In a word, I began to perceive that it would be no light matter, at once, and without maturer perpending of sundry collateral *punctiuncula,* to break up a joint-stock adventure, or society, as civilians term it, which, if profitable to him, had at least promised to be no less so to me, established in years and learning and reputation so much his superior. Moved by which, and other the like considerations, I resolved to proceed with becoming caution on the occasion, and not, by stating my causes of complaint too hastily in the outset, exasperate into a positive breach what might only prove some small misunderstanding, easily explained or apologized for, and which, like a leak in a new vessel, being once discovered and carefully stopped, renders the vessel but more seaworthy than it was before.

About the time that I had adopted this healing resolution, I reached the spot where the almost perpendicular face of a steep hill seems to determinate the valley, or at least divides it into two dells, each serving as a cradle to its own mountain-stream, the Gruffquack, namely, and the shallower but more noisy Gusedub, on the left hand, which, at their union, form the Gander, properly so called. Each of these little valleys has a walk winding up to its recesses, rendered more easy by the labors of the poor during the late hard season, and one of which bears the name of Pattieson's Path, while the other had been kindly consecrated to my own memory by the title of the Dominie's Daidling-bit. Here I made certain to meet my associate, Paul Pattieson, for by one or other of these roads he was wont to return to my house of an evening, after his lengthened rambles.

Nor was it long before I espied him descending the Gusedub by that tortuous path, marking so strongly the character of a Scottish glen. He was easily distinguished, indeed, at some distance, by his jaunty swagger, in which he presented to you the flat of his leg, like the manly knave of clubs, apparently with the most perfect contentment, not only with his leg and boot, but with every part of his outward man, and the whole fashion of his garments, and, one would almost have thought, the contents of his pockets.

In this, his wonted guise, he approached me, where I was seated near the meeting of the waters, and I could not but discern that his first impulse was to pass me without any prolonged or formal greeting. But, as that would not have been decent, considering the terms on which we stood, he seemed to adopt, on reflection, a course directly opposite; bustled up to me with an air of alacrity, and, I may add, impudence; and hastened at once into the middle of the important affairs which it had been my purpose to bring under discussion in a manner more becoming their gravity. "I am glad to see you, Mr. Cleishbotham," said he, with an inimitable mixture of confusion and effrontery; "the most wonderful news which has been heard in the literary world in my time—all Gandercleuch rings with it: they positively speak of nothing else, from Miss Buskbody's youngest apprentice to the minister himself, and ask each other in amazement whether the tidings are true or false—to be sure they are of an astounding complexion, especially to you and me."

"Mr. Pattieson," said I, "I am quite at a loss to guess at your meaning. *Davus sum, non Œdipus*—I am Jedediah Cleishbotham, schoolmaster of the parish of Gandercleuch, no conjurer, and neither reader of riddles nor expounder of enigmata."

"Well," replied Paul Pattieson, "Mr. Jedediah Cleishbotham, schoolmaster of the parish of Gandercleuch, and so forth, all I have to inform you is, that our hopeful scheme is entirely blown up. The tales, on publishing which we reckoned with so much confidence, have already been printed: they are abroad, over all America, and the British papers are clamorous."

I received this news with the same equanimity with which I should have accepted a blow addressed to my stomach by a modern gladiator, with the full energy of his fist. "If this be correct information, Mr. Pattieson," said I, "I must of

necessity suspect you to be the person who have supplied the foreign press with the copy which the printers have thus made an unscrupulous use of, without respect to the rights of the undeniable proprietors of the manuscripts; and I request to know whether this American production embraces the alterations which you as well as I judged necessary, before the work could be fitted to meet the public eye?"

To this my gentleman saw it necessary to make a direct answer, for my manner was impressive and my tone decisive. His native audacity enabled him, however, to keep his ground, and he answered with firmness—

"Mr. Cleishbotham, in the first place, these manuscripts, over which you claim a very doubtful right, were never given to any one by me, and must have been sent to America either by yourself or by some one of the various gentlemen to whom I am well aware, you have afforded opportunities of perusing my brother's MS. remains."

"Mr. Pattieson," I replied, "I beg to remind you that it never could be my intention, either by my own hands or through those of another, to remit these manuscripts to the press until, by the alterations which I meditated, and which you yourself engaged to make, they were rendered fit for public perusal."

Mr. Pattieson answered me with much heat—"Sir, I would have you to know that, if I accepted your paltry offer, it was with less regard to its amount than to the honor and literary fame of my late brother. I foresaw that if I declined it you would not hesitate to throw the task into incapable hands, or, perhaps, have taken it upon yourself, the most unfit of all men to tamper with the works of departed genius, and that, God willing, I was determined to prevent; but the justice of Heaven has taken the matter into its own hands. Peter Pattieson's last labors shall now go down to posterity unscathed by the scalping-knife of alteration in the hands of a false friend—shame on the thought that the unnatural weapon could ever be wielded by the hand of a brother!"

I heard this speech not without a species of vertigo or dizziness in my head, which would probably have struck me lifeless at his feet, had not a thought like that of the old ballad—

Earl Percy sees my fall,

called to my recollection, that I should only afford an additional triumph by giving way to my feelings in the presence

of Mr. Paul Pattieson, who, I could not doubt, must be more or less directly at the bottom of the Transatlantic publication, and had in one way or another found his own interest in that nefarious transaction.

To get quit of his odious presence, I bid him an unceremonious good-night, and marched down the glen with the air not of one who has parted with a friend, but who rather has shaken off an intrusive companion. On the road I pondered the whole matter over with an anxiety which did not in the smallest degree tend to relieve me. Had I felt adequate to the exertion, I might, of course, have supplanted this spurious edition (of which the literary gazettes are already doling out copious specimens) by introducing into a copy, to be instantly published at Edinburgh, adequate correction of the various inconsistencies and imperfections which have already been alluded to. I remember the easy victory of the real second part of these *Tales of my Landlord* over the performance sent forth by an interloper under the same title, and why should not the same triumph be repeated now? There would, in short, have been a pride of talent in this manner of avenging myself, which would have been justifiable in the case of an injured man; but the state of my health has for some time been such as to render any attempt of this nature in every way imprudent.

Under such circumstances, the last "Remains" of Peter Pattieson must even be accepted as they were left in his desk; and I humbly retire in the hope that, such as they are, they may receive the indulgence of those who have ever been but too merciful to the productions of his pen, and in all respects to the courteous reader's obliged servant,

J. C.

GANDERCLEUCH, 15*th Oct.*, 1831.

PREFACE

PREFACE

SIR WALTER SCOTT transmitted from Naples, in February 1832, an introduction for *Castle Dangerous;* but if he ever wrote one for a second edition of *Count Robert of Paris,* it has not been discovered among his papers.

Some notes, chiefly extracts from the books which he had been observed to consult while *dictating* this novel, are now appended to its pages; and in addition to what the Author had given in the shape of historical information respecting the principal real persons introduced, the reader is here presented with what may probably amuse him, the passage of *The Alexiad* in which Anna Comnena describes the incident which originally, no doubt, determined Sir Walter's choice of a hero.

May, A. D. 1097.—As for the multitude of those who advanced towards THE GREAT CITY, let it be enough to say that they were as the stars in the heaven, or as the sand upon the sea-shore. They were, in the words of Homer, as many as the leaves and flowers of spring. But for the names of the leaders, though they are present in my memory, I will not relate them. The numbers of these would alone deter me, even if my language furnished the means of expressing their barbarous sounds; and for what purpose should I afflict my readers with a long enumeration of the names of those whose visible presence gave so much horror to all that beheld them? As soon, therefore, as they approached the Great City, they occupied the station appointed for them by the Emperor, near to the monastery of Cosmidius. But this multitude were not, like the Hellenic one of old, to be restrained and governed by the loud voices of mine heralds: they required the constant superintendence of chosen and valiant soldiers to keep them from violating the commands of the Emperor.

He meantime labored to obtain from the other leaders that acknowledgment of his supreme authority which had already been drawn from Godfrey [Γοντοφρέ] himself. But, notwithstanding the willingness of some to accede to this proposal, and their assistance in working on the minds of their associates, the Emperor's endeavors had little success, as the majority were looking for the arrival of Bohemund [Βαιμούντος], in whom they placed their chief confidence, and resorted to every art with the view of gaining time. The Emperor, whom it was not easy to deceive, penetrated their motives; and by granting to one powerful person demands which

had been supposed out of all bounds of expectation, and by resorting to a variety of other devices, he at length prevailed, and won general assent to the following of the example of Godfrey, who also was sent for in person to assist in this business.

All, therefore, being assembled, and Godfrey among them, the oath was taken; but when all was finished, a certain noble among these counts had the audacity to seat himself on the throne of the Emperor. [Τολμήσας τις εὐγεζής εἰς τὸν σκίμποδα τοῦ Βασιλέως ἐκάθισεν.] The Emperor restrained himself and said nothing, for he was well acquainted of old with the nature of the Latins. But the Count Baldwin [Βαλδουῖνος], stepping forth and seizing him by the hand, dragged him thence, and with many reproaches said, "It becomes thee not to do such things here especially after having taken the oath of fealty [τοιοῦτον . . . ποιῆσαι δουλείαν τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ ταῦτα ὑποσχομένῳ]. It is not the custom of the Roman emperors to permit any of their inferiors to sit beside them, not even of such as are born subjects of their empire; and it is necessary to respect the customs of the country." But he, answering nothing to Baldwin, stared yet more fixedly upon the Emperor, and muttered to himself something in his own dialect, which, being interpreted, was to this effect—"Behold, what rustic fellow [χωρῖτης.] is this, to be seated alone while such leaders stand around him! The movement of his lips did not escape the Emperor, who called to him one that understood the Latin dialect, and inquired what words the man had spoken. When he heard them, the Emperor said nothing to the other Latins, but kept the thing to himself. When, however, the business was all over, he called near to him by himself that swelling and shameless Latin [ὑψηλόφρονα Λατῖνον ἐκεῖνον καὶ ἀναιδῆ], and asked of him, who he was, of what lineage, and from what region he had come. "I am a Frank," said he, "of pure blood, of the nobles. One thing I know, that, where three roads meet in the place from which I came, there is an ancient church, in which whosover has the desire to measure himself against another in single combat prays God to help him therein, and afterwards abides the coming of one willing to encounter him. At that spot long time did I remain, but the man bold enough to stand against me I found not." Hearing these words, the Emperor said, "If hitherto thou hast sought battles in vain, the time is at hand which will furnish thee with abundance of them. And I advise thee to place thyself neither before the phalanx nor in its rear, but to stand fast in the midst of thy fellow-soldiers; for of old time I am well acquainted with the warfare of the Turks." With such advice he dismissed not only this man, but the rest of those who were about to depart on that expedition.—*Alexiad*, Book x. pp. 237, 238.

Ducange, as is mentioned in the novel, identifies the church thus described by the crusader with that of Our Lady of Soissons, of which a French poet of the days of Louis VII. says—

> Veiller y vont encor li pelerin,
> Cil qui bataille veulent fere et fournir.
>
> DUCANGE *in Alexiad*, p. 301.

The Princess Anna Comnena, it may be proper to observe,

was born on the first of December, 1083, and was consequently in her fifteenth year when the chiefs of the first crusade made their appearance in her father's court. Even then, however, it is not improbable that she might have been the wife of Nicephorus Briennius, whom, many years after his death, she speaks of in her history as τὸν ἐμοῦ *Καίσαρα*, and in other terms equally affectionate. The bitterness with which she uniformly mentions Bohemund Count of Tarentum, afterwards Prince of Antioch, has, however, been ascribed to a disappointment in love; and on one remarkable occasion the princess certainly expressed great contempt of her husband. I am aware of no other authorities for the liberties taken with this lady's conjugal character in the novel.

Her husband, Nicephorus Briennius, was the grandson [son, perhaps nephew] of the person of that name who figures in history as the rival, in a contest for the imperial throne, of Nicephorus Botoniates. He was, on his marriage with Anna Comnena, invested with the rank of *panhypersebastos,* or *omnium augustissimus;* but Alexius deeply offended him by afterwards recognizing the superior and simpler dignity of a *sebastos.* His eminent qualities, both in peace and war, are acknowledged by Gibbon; and he has left us four books of Memoirs, detailing the early part of his father-in-law's history, and valuable as being the work of an eye-witness of the most important events which he describes. Anna Comnena appears to have considered it her duty to take up the task which her husband had not lived to complete; and hence *The Alexiad*—certainly, with all its defects, the first historical work that has as yet proceeded from a female pen.

The life of the Emperor Alexius, says Gibbon, has been delineated by [the pen of] a favorite daughter, who was inspired by a tender regard for his person and a laudable zeal to perpetuate his virtues. Conscious of the just suspicion of her readers, the Princess Anna Comnena repeatedly protests that, besides her personal knowledge, she had searched the discourse and writings of the most respectable veterans; that, after an interval of thirty years, forgotten by, and forgetful of, the world, her mournful solitude was inaccessible to hope and fear; and that truth, the naked, perfect truth, was more dear and sacred than the memory of her parent. Yet, instead of the simplicity of style and narrative which wins our belief, an elaborate affectation of rhetoric and science betrays in every page the vanity of a female author. The genuine character of Alexius is lost in a vague constellation of virtues; and the perpetual strain of panegyric and apology awakens our jealousy to question the veracity of the historian and the merit of the hero. We cannot,

however, refuse her judicious and important remark, that the disorders of the times were the misfortune and the glory of Alexius; and that every calamity which can afflict a declining empire was accumulated on his reign by the justice of Heaven and the vices of his predecessors. In the east, the victorious Turks had spread, from Persia to the Hellespont, the reign of the Koran and the Crescent; the west was invaded by the adventurous valor of the Normans; and, in the moments of peace, the Danube poured forth new swarms, who had gained in the science of war what they had lost in the ferociousness of manners. The sea was not less hostile than the land; and, while the frontiers were assaulted by an open enemy, the palace was distracted with secret treason and conspiracy.

On a sudden, the banner of the Cross was displayed by the Latins; Europe was precipitated on Asia; and Constantinople had almost been swept away by this impetuous deluge. In the tempest Alexius steered the imperial vessel with dexterity and courage. At the head of his armies, he was bold in action, skilful in stratagem, patient of fatigue, ready to improve his advantages, and rising from his defeats with inexhaustible vigor. The discipline of the camp was revived, and a new generation of men and soldiers was created by the example and the precepts of their leader. In his intercourse with the Latins, Alexius was patient and artful; his discerning eye pervaded the new system of an unknown world. . .

The increase of the male and female branches of his family adorned the throne and secured the succession; but their princely luxury and pride offended the patricians, exhausted the revenue, and insulted the misery of the people. Anna is a faithful witness that his happiness was destroyed, and his health was broken, by the cares of a public life; the patience of Constantinople was fatigued by the length and severity of his reign; and before Alexius expired, he had lost the love and reverence of his subjects. The clergy could not forgive his application of the sacred riches to the defense of the state; but they applauded his theological learning and ardent zeal for the orthodox faith, which he defended with his tongue, his pen, and his sword. . . . Even the sincerity of his moral and religious virtues was suspected by the persons who had passed their lives in his familiar confidence. In his last hours, when he was pressed by his wife Irene to alter the succession, he raised his head and breathed a pious ejaculation on the vanity of this world. The indignant reply of the Empress may be inscribed as an epitaph on his tomb—"You die as you have lived—an hypocrite."

It was the wish of Irene to supplant the eldest of her surviving sons in favor of her daughter, the Princess Anna, whose philosophy would not have refused the weight of a diadem. But the order of male succession was asserted by the friends of their country; the lawful heir drew the royal signet from the finger of his insensible or conscious father, and the empire obeyed the master of the palace. Anna Comnena was stimulated by ambition and revenge to conspire against the life of her brother; and when the design was prevented by the fears or scruples of her husband, she passionately exclaimed that nature had mistaken the two sexes, and had endowed Breennius with the soul of a woman. . . . After the discovery of her treason, the life and fortune of Anna were justly forfeited to the laws. Her life was spared by the clemency of the

emperor; but he visited the pomp and treasures of her palace, and bestowed the rich confiscation on the most deserving of his friends. —*History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. xlviii.

The year of Anna's death is nowhere recorded. She appears to have written *The Alexiad* in a convent; and to have spent nearly thirty years in this retirement before her book was published.

For accurate particulars of the public events touched on in *Count Robert of Paris,* the reader is referred to the above quoted author, chapters xlviii, and lviii, and to the first volume of Mills's *History of the Crusades.**

J. G. L[OCKHART].

LONDON, 1*st March* 1833.

* The article "Chivalry" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Supplement to 3d, 4th, and 5th, editions, written by Scott, will also be found to contain an interesting allusion to the chief incident in chapter ix, of the novel (*Laing*).

COUNT ROBERT OF PARIS

CHAPTER I

Leontius. That power that kindly spreads
The clouds, a signal of impending showers,
To warn the wandering linnet to the shade,
Beheld without concern expiring Greece,
And not one prodigy foretold our fate.
Demetrius. A thousand horrid prodigies foretold it.
A feeble government, eluded laws,
A factious populace, luxurious nobles,
And all the maladies of sinking states.
When public villainy, too strong for justice,
Shows his bold front, the harbinger of ruin,
Can brave Leontius call for airy wonders,
Which cheats interpret, and which fools regard?

Irene, Act I.

THE close observers of vegetable nature have remarked that, when a new graft is taken from an aged tree, it possesses indeed in exterior form the appearance of a youthful shoot, but has in fact attained to the same state of maturity, or even decay, which has been reached by the parent stem. Hence, it is said, arises the general decline and death that about the same season is often observed to spread itself through individual trees of some particular species, all of which, deriving their vital powers from the parent stock, are therefore incapable of protracting their existence longer than it does.

In the same manner, efforts have been made by the mighty of the earth to transplant large cities, states, and communities by one great and sudden exertion, expecting to secure to the new capital the wealth, the dignity, the magnificent decorations and unlimited extent of the ancient city which they desire to renovate; while, at the same time, they hope to begin a new succession of ages from the date of the new structure, to last, they imagine, as long, and with as much

fame, as its predecessor, which the founder hopes his new metropolis may replace in all its youthful glories. But nature has her laws, which seem to apply to the social as well as the vegetable system. It appears to be a general rule that what is to last long should be slowly matured and gradually improved, while every sudden effort, however gigantic, to bring about the speedy execution of a plan calculated to endure for ages is doomed to exhibit symptoms of premature decay from its very commencement. Thus, in a beautiful Oriental tale, a dervise explains to the sultan how he had reared the magnificent trees among which they walked by nursing their shoots from the seed; and the prince's pride is damped when he reflects that those plantations, so simply raised, were gathering new vigor from each returning sun, while his own exhausted cedars, which had been transplanted by one violent effort, were drooping their majestic heads in the Valley of Orez.*

It has been allowed, I believe, by all men of taste, many of whom have been late visitants of Constantinople, that, if it were possible to survey the whole globe with a view to fixing a seat of universal empire, all who are capable of making such a choice would give their preference to the city of Constantine, as including the great recommendations of beauty, wealth, security, and eminence. Yet, with all these advantages of situation and climate, and with all the architectural splendor of its churches and halls, its quarries of marble, and its treasure-houses of gold, the imperial founder must himself have learned that, although he could employ all these rich materials in obedience to his own wish, it was the mind of man itself, those intellectual faculties refined by the ancients to the highest degree, which had produced the specimens of talent at which men paused and wondered, whether as subjects of art or of moral labor. The power of the Emperor might indeed strip other cities of their statues and their shrines, in order to decorate that which he had fixed upon as his new capital; but the men who had performed great actions, and those, almost equally esteemed, by whom such deeds were celebrated, in poetry, in painting, and in music, had ceased to exist. The nation, though still the most civilized in the world, had passed beyond that period of society when the desire of fair fame is of itself the sole or chief motive for the labor of the historian or the poet, the painter or the statuary. The slavish

* Tale of "Mirglip the Persian," in the *Tales of the Genii* [by Sir Charles Morell, 1765].

and despotic constitution introduced into the empire had long since entirely destroyed that public spirit which animated the free history of Rome, leaving nothing but feeble recollections, which produced no emulation.

To speak as of an animated substance, if Constantine could have regenerated his new metropolis, by transfusing into it the vital and vivifying principles of Old Rome, that brilliant spark no longer remained for Constantinople to borrow or for Rome to lend.

In one most important circumstance, the state of the capital of Constantine had been totally changed, and unspeakably to its advantage. The world was now Christian, and, with the pagan code, had got rid of its load of disgraceful superstition. Nor is there the least doubt that the better faith produced its natural and desirable fruits in society, in gradually ameliorating the hearts and taming the passions of the people. But while many of the converts were turning meekly towards their new creed, some, in the arrogance of their understanding, were limiting the Scriptures by their own devices, and others failed not to make religious character or spiritual rank the means of rising to temporal power. Thus it happened at this critical period that the effects of this great change in the religion of the country, although producing an immediate harvest, as well as sowing much good seed which was to grow hereafter, did not, in the 4th century, flourish so as to shed at once that predominating influence which its principles might have taught men to expect.

Even the borrowed splendor in which Constantine decked his city bore in it something which seemed to mark premature decay. The imperial founder, in seizing upon the ancient statues, pictures, obelisks, and works of art, acknowledged his own incapacity to supply their place with the productions of later genius; and when the world, and particularly Rome, was plundered to adorn Constantinople, the Emperor, under whom the work was carried on, might be compared to a prodigal youth, who strips an aged parent of her youthful ornaments, in order to decorate a flaunting paramour, on whose brow all must consider them as misplaced.

Constantinople, therefore, when in 324 it first arose in imperial majesty out of the humble Byzantium, showed, even in its birth, and amid its adventitious splendor, as we have already said, some intimations of that speedy decay to which the whole civilized world, then limited within the

Roman empire, was internally and imperceptibly tending. Nor was it many ages ere these prognostications of declension were fully verified.

In the year 1080 [1081], Alexius Comnenus * ascended the throne of the Empire—that is, he was declared sovereign of Constantinople, its precincts and dependencies; nor, if he was disposed to lead a life of relaxation, would the savage incursions of the Scythians or the Hungarians frequently disturb the imperial slumbers, if limited to his own capital. It may be supposed that this safety did not extend much farther; for it is said that the Empress Pulcheria had built a church to the Virgin Mary as remote as possible from the gate of the city, to save her devotions from the risk of being interrupted by the hostile yell of the barbarians, and the reigning emperor had constructed a palace near the same spot, and for the same reason.

Alexius Comnenus was in the condition of a monarch who rather derives consequence from the wealth and importance of his predecessors, and the great extent of their original dominions, than from what remnants of fortune had descended to the present generation. This emperor, except nominally, no more ruled over his dismembered provinces than a half-dead horse can exercise power over those limbs on which the hooded crow and the vulture have already begun to settle and select their prey.

In different parts of his territory different enemies arose, who waged successful or dubious war against the Emperor; and of the numerous nations with whom he was engaged in hostilities, whether the Franks from the west, the Turks advancing from the east, the Cumans and Scythians pouring their barbarous numbers and unceasing storm of arrows from the north, and the Saracens, or the tribes into which they were divided, pressing from the south, there was not one for whom the Grecian empire did not spread a tempting repast. Each of these various enemies had their own particular habits of war, and a way of maneuvering in battle peculiar to themselves. But the Roman, as the unfortunate subject of the Greek empire was still called, was by far the weakest, the most ignorant, and most timid who could be dragged into the field; and the Emperor was happy in his own good luck when he found it possible to conduct a defensive war on a counter-balancing principle, making use of the Scythian to repel the Turk, or of both these savage peoples

* See Gibbon, chap. xlviii., for the origin and early history of the house of Comneni.

to drive back the fiery-footed Frank, whom Peter the Hermit had, in the time of Alexius, waked to double fury by the powerful influence of the crusades.

If, therefore, Alexius Comnenus was, during his anxious seat upon the throne of the East, reduced to use a base and truckling course of policy, if he was sometimes reluctant to fight when he had a conscious doubt of the valor of his troops, if he commonly employed cunning and dissimulation instead of wisdom, and perfidy instead of courage, his expedients were the disgrace of the age rather than his own.

Again, the Emperor Alexius may be blamed for affecting a degree of state which was closely allied to imbecility. He was proud of assuming in his own person, and of bestowing upon others, the painted show of various orders of nobility, even now, when the rank within the prince's gift was become an additional reason for the free barbarian despising the imperial noble. That the Greek court was encumbered with unmeaning ceremonies, in order to make amends for the want of that veneration which ought to have been called forth by real worth and the presence of actual power, was not the particular fault of that prince, but belonged to the system of the government of Constantinople for ages. Indeed, in its trumpery etiquette, which provided rules for the most trivial points of a man's behavior during the day, the Greek empire resembled no existing power in its minute follies except that of Pekin; both, doubtless, being influenced by the same vain wish to add seriousness and an appearance of importance to objects which, from their trivial nature, could admit no such distinction.

Yet thus far we must justify Alexius, that, humble as were the expedients he had recourse to, they were more useful to his empire than the measures of a more proud and high-spirited prince might have proved in the same circumstances. He was no champion to break a lance against the breastplate of his Frankish rival, the famous Bohemond of Antioch,* but there were many occasions on which he hazarded his life freely; and, so far as we can see from a minute perusal of his achievements, the Emperor of Greece was never so dangerous "under shield" as when any foeman desired to stop him while retreating from a conflict in which he had been worsted.

But, besides that he did not hesitate, according to the custom of the time, at least occasionally, to commit his person to the perils of close combat, Alexius also possessed

* See Note 1.

such knowledge of a general's profession as is required in our modern days. He knew how to occupy military positions to the best advantage, and often covered defeats, or improved dubious conflicts, in a manner highly to the disappointment of those who deemed that the work of war was done only on the field of battle.

If Alexius Comnenus thus understood the evolutions of war, he was still better skilled in those of politics, where, soaring far above the express purpose of his immediate negotiation, the Emperor was sure to gain some important and permanent advantage; though very often he was ultimately defeated by the unblushing fickleness or avowed treachery of the barbarians, as the Greeks generally termed all other nations, and particularly those tribes (they can hardly be termed states) by which their own empire was surrounded.

We may conclude our brief character of Comnenus by saying that, had he not been called on to fill the station of a monarch who was under the necessity of making himself dreaded, as one who was exposed to all manner of conspiracies, both in and out of his own family, he might, in all probability, have been regarded as an honest and humane prince. Certainly he showed himself a good-natured man, and dealt less in cutting off heads and extinguishing eyes than had been the practise of his predecessors, who generally took this method of shortening the ambitious views of competitors.

It remains to be mentioned, that Alexius had his full share of the superstition of the age, which he covered with a species of hypocrisy. It is even said that his wife, Irene, who, of course, was best acquainted with the real character of the Emperor, taxed her dying husband with practising, in his last moments, the dissimulation which had been his companion during life.* He took also a deep interest in all matters respecting the church, where heresy, which the Emperor held, or affected to hold, in great horror, appeared to him to lurk. Nor do we discover in his treatment of the Manichæans or Paulicians that pity for their speculative errors which modern times might think had been well purchased by the extent of the temporal services of these unfortunate sectaries. Alexius knew no indulgence for those who misinterpreted the mysteries of the church or of its doctrines; and the duty of defending religion against schismatics was, in his opinion, as peremptorily demanded from him as that

* See Gibbon, chap. xlviii.

of protecting the empire against the numberless tribes of barbarians who were encroaching on its boundaries on every side.

Such a mixture of sense and weakness, of meanness and dignity, of prudent discretion and poverty of spirit, which last, in the European mode of viewing things, approached to cowardice, formed the leading traits of the character of Alexius Comnenus, at a period when the fate of Greece, and all that was left in that country of art and civilization, were trembling in the balance, and likely to be saved or lost according to the abilities of the Emperor for playing the very difficult game which was put into his hands.

These few leading circumstances will recall, to any one who is tolerably well read in history, the peculiarities of the period at which we have found a resting-place for the foundation of our story.

CHAPTER II

Othus. This superb successor
Of the earth's mistress, as thou vainly speakest,
Stands midst these ages as, on the wide ocean,
The last spared fragment of a spacious land,
That in some grand and awful ministration
Of mighty nature has engulfed been,
Doth lift aloft its dark and rocky cliffs
O'er the wild waste around, and sadly frowns
In lonely majesty.

Constantine Paleologus, Scene I.

Our scene in the capital of the Eastern Empire opens at what is termed the Golden Gate of Constantinople; and it may be said in passing, that this splendid epithet is not so lightly bestowed as may be expected from the inflated language of the Greeks, which throws such an appearance of exaggeration about them, their buildings, and monuments.

The massive, and seemingly impregnable, walls with which Constantine surrounded the city were greatly improved and added to by Theodosius, called the Great. A triumphal arch, decorated with the architecture of a better, though already a degenerate, age, and serving, at the same time, as an useful entrance, introduced the stranger into the city. On the top, a statue of bronze represented Victory, the goddess who had inclined the scales of battle in favor of Theodosius; and, as the artist determined to be wealthy if he could not be tasteful, the gilded ornaments with which the inscriptions were set off readily led to the popular name of the gate. Figures carved in a distant and happier period of the art glanced from the walls, without assorting happily with the taste in which these were built. The more modern ornaments of the Golden Gate bore, at the period of our story, an aspect very different from those indicating the "conquest brought back to the city" and "the eternal peace," which the flattering inscriptions recorded as having been extorted by the sword of Theodosius. Four or five military engines, for throwing darts of the largest size, were placed upon the summit of the arch; and what had been originally designed as a specimen of architectural embellishment was now applied to the purposes of defense.

It was the hour of evening, and the cool and refreshing breeze from the sea inclined each passenger, whose business was not of a very urgent description, to loiter on his way, and cast a glance at the romantic gateway, and the various interesting objects of nature and art which the city of Constantinople * presented, as well to the inhabitants as to strangers.

One individual, however, seemed to indulge more wonder and curiosity than could have been expected from a native of the city, and looked upon the rarities around with a quick and startled eye, that marked an imagination awakened by sights that were new and strange. The appearance of this person bespoke a foreigner of military habits, who seemed, from his complexion, to have his birthplace far from the Grecian metropolis, whatever chance had at present brought him to the Golden Gate, or whatever place he filled in the Emperor's service.

This young man was about two-and-twenty years old, remarkably finely-formed and athletic—qualities well understood by the citizens of Constantinople, whose habits of frequenting the public games had taught them at least an acquaintance with the human person, and where, in the select of their own countrymen, they saw the handsomest specimens of the human race.

These were, however, not generally so tall as the stranger at the Golden Gate, while his piercing blue eyes, and the fair hair which descended from under a light helmet gaily ornamented with silver, bearing on its summit a crest resembling a dragon in the act of expanding its terrible jaws, intimated a Northern descent, to which the extreme purity of his complexion also bore witness. His beauty, however, though he was eminently distinguished both in features and in person, was not liable to the charge of effeminacy. From this it was rescued both by his strength and by the air of confidence and self-possession with which the youth seemed to regard the wonders around him, not indicating the stupid and helpless gaze of a mind equally inexperienced and incapable of receiving instruction, but expressing the bold intellect which at once understands the greater part of the information which it receives, and commands the spirit to toil in search of the meaning of that which it has not comprehended, or may fear it has misinterpreted. This look of awakened attention and intelligence gave interest to the young barbarian; and while the bystanders were amazed

* See Note 2.

that a savage from some unknown or remote corner of the universe should possess a noble countenance bespeaking a mind so elevated, they respected him for the composure with which he witnessed so many things, the fashion, the splendor, nay, the very use, of which must have been recently new to him.

The young man's personal equipments exhibited a singular mixture of splendor and effeminacy, and enabled the experienced spectators to ascertain his nation, and the capacity in which he served. We have already mentioned the fanciful and crested helmet which was a distinction of the foreigner, to which the reader must add in his imagination a small cuirass or breastplate of silver, so sparingly fashioned as obviously to afford little security to the broad chest, on which it rather hung like an ornament than covered as a buckler; nor, if a well-thrown dart or strongly-shod arrow should alight full on this rich piece of armor, was there much hope that it could protect the bosom which it partially shielded.

From betwixt the shoulders hung down over the back what had the appearance of a bearskin; but, when more closely examined, it was only a very skilful imitation of the spoils of the chase, being in reality a surcoat composed of strong shaggy silk, so woven as to exhibit, at a little distance, no inaccurate representation of a bear's hide. A light crooked sword, or scimitar, sheathed in a scabbard of gold and ivory, hung by the left side of the stranger, the ornamented hilt of which appeared much too small for the large-jointed hand of the young Hercules who was thus gaily attired. A dress, purple in color, and sitting close to the limbs, covered the body of the soldier to a little above the knee; from thence the knees and legs were bare to the calf, to which the reticulated strings of the sandals rose from the instep, the ligatures being there fixed by a golden coin of the reigning emperor, converted into a species of clasp for the purpose.

But a weapon which seemed more particularly adapted to the young barbarian's size, and incapable of being used by a man of less formidable limbs and sinews, was a battle-ax, the firm iron-guarded staff of which was formed of tough elm, strongly inlaid and defended with brass, while many a plate and ring were indented in the handle, to hold the wood and the steel parts together. The ax itself was composed of two blades, turning different ways, with a sharp steel spike projecting from between them. The steel part,

both spike and blade, was burnished as bright as a mirror; and though its ponderous size must have been burdensome to one weaker than himself, yet the young soldier carried it as carelessly along as if it were but a feather's weight. It was, indeed, a skilfully constructed weapon, so well balanced, that it was much lighter in striking and in recovery than he who saw it in the hands of another could easily have believed.

The carrying arms of itself showed that the military man was a stranger. The native Greeks had that mark of a civilized people, that they never bore weapons during the time of peace, unless the wearer chanced to be numbered among those whose military profession and employment required them to be always in arms. Such soldiers by profession were easily distinguished from the peaceful citizens; and it was with some evident show of fear, as well as dislike, that the passengers observed to each other that the stranger was a Varangian, an expression which intimated a barbarian of the imperial body-guard.

To supply the deficiency of valor among his own subjects, and to procure soldiers who should be personally dependent on the Emperor, the Greek sovereigns had been, for a great many years, in the custom of maintaining in their pay, as near their person as they could, the steady services of a select number of mercenaries in the capacity of body-guards, which were numerous enough, when their steady discipline and inflexible loyalty were taken in conjunction with their personal strength and indomitable courage, to defeat not only any traitorous attempt on the imperial person, but to quell open rebellions, unless such were supported by a great proportion of the military force. Their pay was therefore liberal; their rank and established character for prowess gave them a degree of consideration among the people, whose reputation for valor had not for some ages stood high; and if, as foreigners, and the members of a privileged body, the Varangians were sometimes employed in arbitrary and unpopular services, the natives were so apt to fear, while they disliked, them, that the hardy strangers disturbed themselves but little about the light in which they were regarded by the inhabitants of Constantinople. Their dress and accouterments, while within the city, partook of the rich, or rather gaudy, costume which we have described, bearing only a sort of affected resemblance to that which the Varangians wore in their native forests. But the individuals of this select corps were, when their services were required beyond

the city, furnished with armor and weapons more resembling those which they were accustomed to wield in their own country, possessing much less of the splendor of war, and a far greater portion of its effective terrors; and thus they were summoned to take the field.

This body of Varangians (which term is, according to one interpretation, merely a general expression for barbarians) was, in an early age of the empire, formed of the roving and piratical inhabitants of the North, whom a love of adventure, the greatest perhaps that ever was indulged, and a contempt of danger, which never had a parallel in the history of human nature, drove forth upon the pathless ocean. "Piracy," says Gibbon, with his usual spirit, "was the exercise, the trade, the glory, and the virtue of the Scandinavian youth. Impatient of a bleak climate and narrow limits, they started from the banquet, grasped their arms, sounded their horn, ascended their vessels, and explored every coast that promised either spoil or settlement." *

The conquests made in France and Britain by these wild sea-kings, as they were called, have obscured the remembrance of other Northern champions, who, long before the time of Comnenus, made excursions as far as Constantinople, and witnessed with their own eyes the wealth and the weakness of the Grecian empire itself. Numbers found their way thither through the pathless wastes of Russia; others navigated the Mediterranean in their sea-serpents, as they termed their piratical vessels. The emperors, terrified at the appearance of these daring inhabitants of the frozen zone, had recourse to the usual policy of a rich and unwarlike people, bought with gold the service of their swords, and thus formed a corps of satellites more distinguished for valor than the famed Prætorian Bands of Rome, and, perhaps because fewer in number, unalterably loyal to their new princes.

But, at a later period of the empire, it began to be more difficult for the emperors to obtain recruits for their favorite and selected corps, the Northern nations having now in a great measure laid aside the piratical and roving habits which had driven their ancestors from the straits of Elsinore to those of Sestos and Abydos. The corps of the Varangians must therefore have died out, or have been filled up with less worthy materials had not the conquests made by the Normans in the far distant west sent to the aid of Comnenus a large body of

* *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. x., chapter lv. p. 221, 8vo edition.

the dispossessed inhabitants of the islands of Britain, and particularly of England, who furnished recruits to his chosen body-guard. These were, in fact, Anglo-Saxons; but, in the confused idea of geography received at the court of Constantinople, they were naturally enough called Anglo-Danes, as their native country was confounded with the Thule of the ancients, by which expression the archipelago of Zetland and Orkney is properly to be understood, though, according to the notions of the Greeks, it comprised either Denmark or Britain. The emigrants, however, spoke a language not very dissimilar to the original Varangians, and adopted the name the more readily, that it seemed to remind them of their unhappy fate, the appellation being in one sense capable of being interpreted as exiles. Excepting one or two chief commanders, whom the Emperor judged worthy of such high trust, the Varangians were officered by men of thir own nation; and with so many privileges, being joined by many of their countrymen from time to time, as the crusades, pilgrimages, or discontent at home drove fresh supplies of the Anglo-Saxons, or Anglo-Danes, to the east, the Varangians subsisted in strength to the last days of the Greek empire, retaining their native language, along with the unblemished loyalty and unabated martial spirit which characterized their fathers.

This account of the Varangian Guard * is strictly historical and might be proved by reference to the Byzantine historians; most of whom, and also Villehardouin's account of the taking of the city of Constantinople by the Franks and Venetians, make repeated mention of this celebrated and singular body of Englishmen, forming a mercenary guard attendant on the person of the Greek emperors.

Having said enough to explain why an individual Varangian should be strolling about the Golden Gate, we may proceed in the story which we have commenced.

Let it not be thought extraordinary that this soldier of the life-guard should be looked upon with some degree of curiosity by the passing citizens. It must be supposed that, from their peculiar duties, they were not encouraged to hold frequent intercourse or communication with the inhabitants; and, besides that they had duties of police occasionally to exercise amongst them, which made them generally more dreaded than beloved, they were at the same time conscious that their high pay, splendid appointments, and immediate dependence on the emperor were subjects of envy to the

* See Note ?

other forces. They, therefore, kept much in the neighborhood of their own barracks, and were seldom seen straggling remote from them, unless they had a commission of government entrusted to their charge.

This being the case, it was natural that a people so curious as the Greeks should busy themselves in eyeing the stranger as he loitered in one spot, or wandered to and fro, like a man who either could not find some place which he was seeking, or had failed to meet some person with whom he had an appointment, for which the ingenuity of the passengers found a thousand different and inconsistent reasons. "A Varangian," said one citizen to another, "and upon duty—ahem ! Then I presume to say in your ear——"

"What do you imagine is his object ?" inquired the party to whom this information was addressed.

"Gods and goddesses ! do you think I can tell you ? But suppose that he is lurking here to hear what folk say of the Emperor," answered the *quidunc* of Constantinople.

"That is not likely," said the querist: "these Varangians do not speak our language, and are not extremely well fitted for spies, since few of them pretend to any intelligible notion of the Grecian tongue. It is not likely, I think, that the Emperor would employ as a spy a man who did not understand the language of the country."

"But if there are, as all men fancy," answered the politician, "persons among these barbarian soldiers who can speak almost all languages, you will admit that such are excellently qualified for seeing clearly around them, since they possess the talent of beholding and reporting, while no one has the slightest idea of suspecting them."

"It may well be," replied his companion ; "but, since we see so clearly the fox's foot and paws protruding from beneath the seeming sheep's fleece, or rather, by your leave, the *bear's* hide, yonder, had we not better be jogging homeward, ere it be pretended we have insulted a Varangian Guard ?"

This surmise of danger insinuated by the last speaker, who was a much older and more experienced politician than his friend, determined both on a hasty retreat. They adjusted their cloaks, caught hold of each other's arm, and, speaking fast and thick as they started new subjects of suspicion, they sped, close coupled together, towards their habitations in a different and distant quarter of the town.

In the meantime, the sunset was nigh over ; and the long shadows of the walls, bulwarks, and arches were projecting

from the westward in deeper and blacker shade. The Varangian seemed tired of the short and lingering circle in which he had now trodden for more than an hour, and in which he still loitered like an unliberated spirit, which cannot leave the haunted spot till licensed by the spell which has brought it hither. Even so the barbarian, casting an impatient glance to the sun, which was setting in a blaze of light behind a rich grove of cypress-trees, looked for some accommodation on the benches of stone which were placed under shadow of the triumphal arch of Theodosius, drew the ax, which was his principal weapon, close to his side, wrapped his cloak about him, and, though his dress was not in other respects a fit attire for slumber, any more than the place well selected for repose, yet in less than three minutes he was fast asleep. The irresistible impulse which induced him to seek for repose in a place very indifferently fitted for the purpose might be weariness consequent upon the military vigils which had proved a part of his duty on the preceding evening. At the same time, his spirit was so alive within him, even while he gave way to this transient fit of oblivion, that he remained almost awake even with shut eyes, and no hound ever seemed to sleep more lightly than our Anglo-Saxon at the Golden Gate of Constantinople.

And now the slumberer, as the loiterer had been before, was the subject of observation to the accidental passengers. Two men entered the porch in company. One was a somewhat slight-made but alert-looking man, by name Lysimachus, and by profession a designer. A roll of paper in his hand, with a little satchel containing a few chalks, or pencils, completed his stock-in-trade; and his acquaintance with the remains of ancient art gave him a power of talking on the subject which unfortunately bore more than due proportion to his talents of execution. His companion, a magnificent-looking man in form, and so far resembling the young barbarian, but more clownish and peasant-like in the expression of his features, was Stephanos the wrestler, well-known in the *palestra*.

"Stop here, my friend," said the artist, producing his pencils, "till I make a sketch for my youthful Hercules."

"I thought Hercules had been a Greek," said the wrestler. "This sleeping animal is a barbarian."

The tone intimated some offense, and the designer hastened to soothe the displeasure which he had thoughtlessly excited. Stephanos, known by the surname of Castor, who was highly distinguished for gymnastic exercises, was a sort

of patron to the little artist, and not unlikely by his own reputation to bring the talents of his friend into notice.

"Beauty and strength," said the adroit artist, "are of no particular nation; and may our muse never deign me her prize, but it is my greatest pleasure to compare them as existing in the uncultivated savage of the North and when they are found in the darling of an enlightened people, who has added the height of gymnastic skill to the most distinguished natural qualities, such as we can now only see in the works of Phidias and Praxiteles, or in our living model of the gymnastic champions of antiquity."

"Nay, I acknowledge that the Varangian is a proper man," said the athletic hero, softening his tone; "but the poor savage hath not, perhaps in his lifetime, had a single drop of oil on his bosom. Hercules instituted the Isthmian games——"

"But, hold! what sleeps he with, wrapt so close in his bearskin?" said the artist. "Is it a club?"

"Away—away, my friend!" cried Stephanos, as they looked closer on the sleeper. "Do you not know that is the instrument of their barbarous office? They do not war with swords or lances, as if destined to attack men of flesh and blood, but with maces and axes, as if they were to hack limbs formed of stone and sinews of oak. I will wager my crown (of withered parsley) that he lies here to arrest some distinguished commander who has offended the government! He would not have been thus formidably armed otherwise. Away—away, good Lysimachus; let us respect the slumbers of the bear."

So saying, the champion of the *palestra* made off with less apparent confidence than his size and strength might have inspired.

Others, now thinly straggling, passed onward as the evening closed, and the shadows of the cypress-trees fell darker around. Two females of the lower rank cast their eyes on the sleeper. "Holy Maria!" said one, "if he does not put me in mind of the Eastern tale, how the genie brought a gallant young prince from his nuptial chamber in Egypt, and left him sleeping at the gate of Damascus. I will awake the poor lamb, lest he catch harm from the night dew."

"Harm!" answered the older and crosser-looking woman. "Ay, such harm as the cold water of the Cydnus does to the wild swan. A lamb! Ay, forsooth! Why, he's a wolf or a bear, at least a Varangian, and no modest matron would

exchange a word with such an unmannered barbarian. I'll tell you what one of these English Danes did to me——"

So saying, she drew on her companion, who followed with some reluctance, seeming to listen to her gabble, while she looked back upon the sleeper.

The total disappearance of the sun, and nearly at the same time the departure of the twilight, which lasts so short a time in that tropical region—one of the few advantages which a more temperate climate possesses over it being the longer continuance of that sweet and placid light—gave signal to the warders of the city to shut the folding leaves of the Golden Gate, leaving a wicket lightly bolted for the passage of those whom business might have detained too late without the walls, and indeed for all who chose to pay a small coin. The position and apparent insensibility of the Varangian did not escape those who had charge of the gate, of whom there was a strong guard which belonged to the ordinary Greek forces.

"By Castor and by Pollux," said the centurion, for the Greeks swore by the ancient deities, although they no longer worshiped them, and preserved those military distinctions with which "the steady Roman's shook the world," although they were altogether degenerated from their original manners—"by Castor and Pollux, comrades, we cannot gather gold in this gate according as its legend tells us, yet it will be our fault if we cannot glean a goodly crop of silver; and though the golden age be the most ancient and honorable, yet in this degenerate time it is much if we see a glimpse of the inferior metal."

"Unworthy are we to follow the noble centurion Harpax," answered one of the soldiers of the watch, who showed the shaven head and the single tuft * of a Mussulman, "if we do not hold silver a sufficient cause to bestir ourselves, when there has been no gold to be had—as, by the faith of an honest man, I think we can hardly tell its color—whether out of the imperial treasury or obtained at the expense of individuals, for many long moons!"

"But this silver," said the centurion, "thou shalt see with thine own eye, and hear it ring a knell in the purse which holds our common stock."

"Which *did* hold it, as thou wouldst say, most valiant commander," replied the inferior warder; "but what that purse holds now, save a few miserable oboli for purchasing

* One tuft is left on the shaven crown of the Moslem, for the angel to grasp by, when conveying him to Paradise.

certain pickled pot-herbs and salt fish, to relish our allowance of stummed wine, I cannot tell, but willingly give my share of the contents to the devil, if either purse or platter exhibits symptom of any age richer than the age of copper."

"I will replenish our treasury," said the centurion, "were our stock yet lower than it is. Stand up close by the wicket, my masters. Bethink you, we are the Imperial Guards, or the guards of the Imperial City, it is all one, and let us have no man rush past us on a sudden; and now that we are on our guard, I will unfold to you—— But stop," said the valiant centurion, "are we all here true brothers? Do all well understand the ancient and laudable customs of our watch—keeping all things secret which concern the profit and advantage of this our vigil, and aiding and abetting the common cause, without information or treachery?"

"You are strangely suspicious to-night," answered the sentinel. "Methinks we have stood by you without tale-telling in matters which were more weighty. Have you forgot the passage of the jeweler, which was neither the gold nor silver age; but if there were a diamond one——"

"Peace, good Ismail the Infidel," said the centurion—"for, I thank Heaven, we are of all religions, so it is to be hoped we must have the true one amongst us—peace, I say; it is unnecessary to prove thou canst keep new secrets by ripping up old ones. Come hither, look through the wicket to the stone bench on the shady side of the grand porch—tell me, old lad, what dost thou see there?"

"A man asleep," said Ismail. "By Heaven, I think, from what I can see by the moonlight, that it is one of those barbarians, one of those island dogs, whom the Emperor sets such store by!"

"And can thy fertile brain," said the centurion, "spin nothing out of his present situation tending towards our advantage?"

"Why, ay," said Ismail; "they have large pay, though they are not only barbarians, but pagan dogs, in comparison with us Moslems and Nazarenes. That fellow hath besotted himself with liquor, and hath not found his way home to his barracks in good time. He will be severely punished, unless we consent to admit him; and to prevail on us to do so, he must empty the contents of his girdle."

"That, at least—that, at least," answered the soldiers of the city watch, but carefully suppressing their voices, though they spoke in an eager tone.

"And is that all that you would make of such an oppor-

tunity ?" said Harpax, scornfully. "No—no, comrades. If this outlandish animal indeed escape us, he must at least leave his fleece behind. See you not the gleams from his headpiece and his cuirass ? I presume these betoken substantial silver, though it may be of the thinnest. There lies the silver mine I spoke of, ready to enrich the dexterous hands who shall labor it."

"But," said timidly a young Greek, a companion of their watch lately enlisted in the corps, and unacquainted with their habits, "still this barbarian, as you call him, is a soldier of the Emperor ; and if we are convicted of depriving him of his arms, we shall be justly punished for a military crime."

"Hear to a new Lycurgus come to teach us our duty !" said the centurion. "Learn first, young man, that the metropolitan cohort never can commit a crime, and learn next, of course, that they can never be convicted of one. Suppose we found a straggling barbarian, a Varangian like this slumberer, perhaps a Frank, or some other of these foreigners bearing unpronounceable names, while they dishonor us by putting on the arms and apparel of the real Roman soldier, are we, placed to defend an important post, to admit a man so suspicious within our postern, when the event may probably be to betray both the Golden Gate and the hearts of gold who guard it—to have the one seized and the throats of the others handsomely cut ?"

"Keep him outside the gate, then," replied the novice, "if you think him so dangerous. For my part, I should not fear him, were he deprived of that huge double-edged ax, which gleams from under his cloak, having a more deadly glare than the comet which astrologers prophesy such strange things of."

"Nay, then, we agree together," answered Harpax, "and you speak like a youth of modesty and sense ; and I promise you the state will lose nothing in the despoiling of this same barbarian. Each of these savages hath a double set of accouterments, the one wrought with gold, silver, inlaid work, and ivory, as becomes their duties in the prince's household ; the other fashioned of triple steel, strong, weighty, and irresistible. Now, in taking from this suspicious character his silver helmet and cuirass, you reduce him to his proper weapons, and you will see him start up in arms fit for duty."

"Yes," said the novice ; "but I do not see that this reasoning will do more than warrant our stripping the Varangian

of his armor, to be afterwards heedfully returned to him on the morrow, if he prove a true man. How, I know not, but I had adopted some idea that it was to be confiscated for our joint behoof."

"Unquestionably," said Harpax; "for such has been the rule of our watch ever since the days of the excellent centurion Sisyphus, in whose time it first was determined that all contraband commodities, or suspicious weapons, or the like, which were brought into the city during the night-watch, should be uniformly forfeited to the use of the soldiery of the guard; and where the Emperor finds the goods or arms unjustly seized, I hope he is rich enough to make it up to the sufferer."

"But still—but still," said Sebastes of Mitylene, the young Greek aforesaid, "were the Emperor to discover——"

"Ass!" replied Harpax, "he cannot discover, if he had all the eyes of Argus's tail. Here are twelve of us, sworn, according to the rules of the watch, to abide in the same story. Here is a barbarian, who, if he remembers anything of the matter—which I greatly doubt, his choice of a lodging arguing his familiarity with the wine-pot—tells but a wild tale of losing his armor, which we, my masters (looking round to his companions), deny stoutly—I hope we have courage enough for that—and which party will be believed? The companions of the watch, surely!"

"Quite the contrary," said Sebastes. "I was born at a distance from hence; yet, even in the island of Mitylene, the rumor had reached me that the cavaliers of the city-guard of Constantinople were so accomplished in falsehood that the oath of a single barbarian would outweigh the Christian oath of the whole body, if Christian some of them are—for example, this dark man with a single tuft on his head."

"And if it were even so," said the centurion, with a gloomy and sinister look, "there is another way of making the transaction a safe one."

Sebastes, fixing his eye on his commander, moved his hand to the hilt of an Eastern poniard which he wore, as if to penetrate his exact meaning. The centurion nodded in acquiescence.

"Young as I am," said Sebastes, "I have been already a pirate five years at sea, and a robber three years now in the hills, and it is the first time I have seen or heard a man hesitate, in such a case, to take the only part which is worth a brave man's while to resort to in a pressing affair."

Harpax struck his hand into that of the soldier, as sharing his uncompromising sentiments; but when he spoke it was in a tremulous voice.

"How shall we deal with him?" said he to Sebastes, who, from the most raw recruit in the corps, had now risen to the highest place in his estimation.

"Anyhow," returned the islander; "I see bows here and shafts, and if no other person can use them——"

"They are not," said the centurion, "the regular arms of our corps."

"The fitter you to guard the gates of a city," said the young soldier with a horse-laugh, which had something insulting in it. "Well—be it so. I can shoot like a Scythian," he proceeded: "nod but with your head, one shaft shall crash among the splinters of his skull and his brains, the second shall quiver in his heart."

"Bravo, my noble comrade!" said Harpax, in a tone of affected rapture, always lowering his voice, however, as respecting the slumbers of the Varangian. "Such were the robbers of ancient days, the Diomedes, Corynetes, Synnes, Scyrons, Procrustes, whom it required demigods to bring to what was miscalled justice, and whose compeers and fellows will remain masters of the continent and the Isles of Greece, until Hercules and Theseus shall again appear upon earth. Nevertheless, shoot not, my valiant Sebastes—draw not the bow, my invaluable Mitylenian; you may wound and not kill."

"I am little wont to do so," said Sebastes, again repeating the hoarse, chuckling, discordant laugh, which grated upon the ears of the centurion, though he could hardly tell the reason why it was so uncommonly unpleasant.

"If I look not about me," was his internal reflection, "we shall have two centurions of the watch instead of one. This Mitylenian, or be he who the devil will, is a bow's length beyond me. I must keep my eye on him." He then spoke aloud, in a tone of authority. "But come, young man, it is hard to discourage a young beginner. If you have been such a rover of wood and river as you tell us of, you know how to play the *sicarius:* there lies your object, drunk or asleep, we know not which—you will deal with him in either case."

"Will you give me no odds to stab a stupefied or drunken man, most noble centurion?" answered the Greek. "You would perhaps love the commission yourself?" he continued, somewhat ironically.

"Do as you are directed, friend," said Harpax, pointing to the turret staircase which led down from the battlement to the arched entrance underneath the porch.

"He has the true cat-like, stealthy-pace," half-muttered the centurion, as his sentinel descended to do such a crime as he was posted there to prevent. "This cockerel's comb must be cut, or he will become king of the roost. But let us see if his hand be as resolute as his tongue; then we will consider what term to give to the conclusion."

As Harpax spoke between his teeth, and rather to himself than any of his companions, the Mitylenian emerged from under the archway, treading on tiptoe, yet swiftly, with an admirable mixture of silence and celerity. His poniard, drawn as he descended, gleamed in his hand, which was held a little behind the rest of his person, so as to conceal it. The assassin hovered less than an instant over the sleeper, as if to mark the interval between the ill-fated silver corslet and the body which it was designed to protect, when, at the instant the blow was rushing to its descent, the Varangian started up at once, arrested the armed hand of the assassin, by striking it upward with the head of his battle-ax; and, while he thus parried the intended stab, struck the Greek a blow heavier than Sebastes had ever learned at the *pancration*, which left him scarce the power to cry "help" to his comrades on the battlements. They saw what had happened, however, and beheld the barbarian set his foot on their companion, and brandish high his formidable weapon, the whistling sound of which made the old arch ring ominously, while he paused an instant, with his weapon upheaved, ere he gave the finishing blow to his enemy. The warders made a bustle, as if some of them would descend to the assistance of Sebastes, without, however, appearing very eager to do so, when Harpax, in a rapid whisper, commanded them to stand fast.

"Each man to his place," he said, "happen what may. Yonder comes a captain of the guard; the secret is our own, if the savage has killed the Mitylenian, as I well trust, for he stirs neither hand nor foot. But if he lives, my comrades, make hard your faces as flint; he is but one man, we are twelve. We know nothing of his purpose, save that he went to see wherefore the barbarian slept so near the post."

While the centurion thus bruited his purpose in busy insinuation to the companions of his watch, the stately figure of a tall soldier, richly armed, and presenting a lofty crest,

which glistened as he stepped from the open moonlight into the shade of the vault, became visible beneath. A whisper passed among the warders on the top of the gate.

"Draw bolt, shut gate, come of the Mitylenian what will," said the centurion; "we are lost men if we own him. Here comes the chief of the Varangian axes, the Follower himself."

"Well, Hereward," said the officer who came last upon the scene, in a sort of *lingua franca,* generally used by the barbarians of the guard, "hast thou caught a night-hawk?"

"Ay, by St. George!" answered the soldier; "and yet, in my country, we would call him but a kite."

"What is he?" said the leader.

"He will tell you that himself," replied the Varangian, "when I take my grasp from his windpipe."

"Let him go, then," said the officer.

The Englishman did as he was commanded. But, escaping as soon as he felt himself at liberty, with an alertness which could scarce have been anticipated, the Mitylenian rushed out at the arch, and, availing himself of the complicated ornaments which had originally graced the exterior of the gateway, he fled around buttress and projection, closely pursued by the Varangian, who, cumbered with his armor, was hardly a match in the course for the light-footed Grecian, as he dodged his pursuer from one skulking-place to another. The officer laughed heartily as the two figures, like shadows appearing, and disappearing as suddenly, held rapid flight and chase around the arch of Theodosius.

"By Hercules! it is Hector pursued round the walls of Ilion by Achilles," said the officer; "but my Pelides will scarce overtake the son of Priam. What, ho! goddess-born—son of the white-footed Thetis! But the allusion is lost on the poor savage. Halloo, Hereward! I say, stop—know thine own most barbarous name." These last words were muttered; then raising his voice, "Do not outrun thy wind. good Hereward. Thou mayst have more occasion for breath to-night."

"If it had been my leader's will," answered the Varangian, coming back in sulky mood, and breathing like one who had been at the top of his speed, "I would have had him as fast as ever greyhound held hare, ere I left off the chase. Were it not for this foolish armor, which encumbers without defending one, I would not have made two bounds without taking him by the throat."

"As well as it is," said the officer, who was, in fact, the

Acoulouthos, or Follower, so called because it was the duty of this highly-trusted officer of the Varangian Guards constantly to attend on the person of the Emperor. "But let us now see by what means we are to regain our entrance through the gate; for if, as I suspect, it was one of those warders who was willing to have played thee a trick, his companions may not let us enter willingly."

"And is it not," said the Varangian, "your valor's duty to probe this want of discipline to the bottom?"

"Hush thee here, my simple-minded savage! I have often told you, most ignorant Hereward, that the skulls of those who come from your cold and muddy Bœotia of the North are fitter to bear out twenty blows with a sledge-hammer than turn off one witty or ingenious idea. But follow me, Hereward, and although I am aware that showing the fine meshes of Grecian policy to the coarse eye of an unpractised barbarian like thee is much like casting pearls before swine, a thing forbidden in the Blessed Gospel, yet, as thou hast so good a heart and so trusty, as is scarce to be met with among my Varangians themselves, I care not if, while thou art in attendance on my person, I endeavor to indoctrinate thee in some of that policy by which I myself, the Follower, the chief of the Varangians, and therefore erected by their axes into the most valiant of the valiant, am content to guide myself, although every way qualified to bear me through the cross-currents of the court by main pull of oar and press of sail—a condescension in me, to do that by policy which no man in this imperial court, the chosen sphere of superior wits, could so well accomplish by open force as myself. What think'st thou, good savage?"

"I know," answered the Varangian, who walked about a step and a half behind his leader, like an orderly of the present day behind his officer's shoulder, "I should be sorry to trouble my head with what I could do by my hands, at once."

"Did I not say so?" replied the Follower, who had now for some minutes led the way from the Golden Gate, and was seen gliding along the outside of the moonlight walls, as if seeking an entrance elsewhere. "Lo, such is the stuff of what you call your head is made! Your hands and arms are perfect Achitophels compared to it. Hearken to me, thou most ignorant of all animals—but, for that very reason, thou stoutest of confidants and bravest of soldiers—I will tell thee the very riddle of this night-work, and yet, even then, I doubt if thou canst understand me."

"It is my present duty to try to comprehend your valor," said the Varangian—"I would say your policy, since you condescend to expound it to me. As for your valor," he added, "I should be unlucky if I did not think I understand its length and breadth already."

The Greek general colored a little, but replied, with unaltered voice, "True, good Hereward. We have seen each other in battle."

Hereward here could not suppress a short cough, which, to those grammarians of the day who were skilful in applying the use of accents, would have implied no peculiar eulogium on his officer's military bravery. Indeed, during their whole intercourse, the conversation of the general, in spite of his tone of affected importance and superiority, displayed an obvious respect for his companion, as one who, in many points of action, might, if brought to the test, prove a more effective soldier than himself. On the other hand, when the powerful Northern warrior replied, although it was with all observance of discipline and duty, yet the discussion might sometimes resemble that between an ignorant macaroni officer, before the Duke of York's reformation of the British army, and a steady sergeant of the regiment in which they both served. There was a consciousness of superiority, disguised by external respect, and half admitted by the leader.

"You will grant me, my simple friend," continued the chief, in the same tone as before, "in order to lead thee by a short passage into the deepest principle of policy which pervades this same court of Constantinople, that the favor of the Emperor (here the officer raised his casque, and the soldier made a semblance of doing so also), who—be the place where he puts his foot sacred!—is the vivifying principle of the sphere in which we live, as the sun itself is that of humanity——"

"I have heard something like this said by our tribunes," said the Varangian.

"It is their duty so to instruct you," answered the leader; "and I trust that the priests also, in their sphere, forget not to teach my Varangians their constant service to their emperor."

"They do not omit it," replied the soldier, "though we of the exiles know our duty."

"God forbid I should doubt it," said the commander of the battle-axes. "All I mean is to make thee understand, my dear Hereward, that as there are, though perhaps such

do not exist in thy dark and gloomy climate, a race of insects which are born in the first rays of the morning and expire with those of sunset, thence called by us *ephemeræ*, as enduring one day only, such is the case of a favorite at court, while enjoying the smiles of the Most Sacred Emperor. And happy is he whose favor, rising as the person of the sovereign emerges from the level space which extends around the throne, displays itself in the first imperial blaze of glory, and who, keeping his post during the meridian splendor of the crown, has only the fate to disappear and die with the last beam of imperial brightness."

"Your valor," said the islander, "speaks higher language than my Northern wits are able to comprehend. Only, methinks, rather than part with life at the sunset, I would, since insect I must needs be, become a moth for two or three dark hours."

"Such is the sordid desire of the vulgar, Hereward," answered the Follower, with assumed superiority, "who are contented to enjoy life, lacking distinction; whereas we, on the other hand—we of choicer quality, who form the nearest and innermost circle around the Imperial Alexius, in which he himself forms the central point, are watchful, to woman's jealousy, of the distribution of his favors, and omit no opportunity, whether by leaguing with or against each other, to recommend ourselves individually to the peculiar light of his countenance."

"I think I comprehend what you mean," said the guardsman; "although as for living such a life of intrigue—but that matters not."

"It does indeed matter not, my good Hereward," said his officer, "and thou art lucky in having no appetite for the life I have described. Yet have I seen barbarians rise high in the empire, and if they have not altogether the flexibility—the malleability, as it is called—that happy ductility which can give way to circumstances, I have yet known those of barbaric tribes, especially if bred up at court from their youth, who joined to a limited portion of this flexile quality enough of a certain tough durability of temper, which, if it does not excel in availing itself of opportunity, has no contemptible talent at creating it. But letting comparisons pass, it follows, from this emulation of glory—that is, of royal favor—amongst the servants of the imperial and most sacred court, that each is desirous of distinguishing himself by showing to the Emperor, not only that he fully understands the duties of his own employments, but that he

is capable, in case of necessity, of discharging those of others."

"I understand," said the Saxon; "and thence it happens that the under-ministers, soldiers, and assistants of the great crown-officers are perpetually engaged, not in aiding each other, but in acting as spies on their neighbors' actions?"

"Even so," answered the commander; "it is but few days since I had a disagreeable instance of it. Every one, however dull in the intellect, hath understood this much, that the great Protospathaire,* which title thou knowest signifies the general-in-chief of the forces of the empire, hath me at hatred, because I am the leader of those redoubtable Varangians, who enjoy, and well deserve, privileges exempting them from the absolute command which he possesses over all other corps of the army—an authority which becomes Nicanor, notwithstanding the victorious sound of his name, nearly as well as a war-saddle would become a bullock."

"How!" said the Varangian, "does the Protospathaire pretend to any authority over the noble exiles! By the red dragon, under which we will live and die, we will obey no man alive but Alexius Comnenus himself, and our own officers!"

"Rightly and bravely resolved," said the leader; "but, my good Hereward, let not your just indignation hurry you so far as to name the Most Sacred Emperor without raising your hand to your casque, and adding the epithets of his lofty rank."

"I will raise my hand often enough and high enough," said the Norseman, "when the Emperor's service requires it."

"I dare be sworn thou wilt," said Achilles Tatius, the commander of the Varangian Imperial Body-Guard, who thought the time was unfavorable for distinguishing himself by insisting on that exact observance of etiquette which was one of his great pretensions to the name of a soldier. "Yet, were it not for the constant vigilance of your leader, my child, the noble Varangians would be trod down, in the common mass of the army, with the heathen cohorts of Huns, Scythians, or those turbaned infidels the renegade Turks; and even for this is your commander here in peril, because he vindicates his axmen as worthy of being prized above the paltry shafts of the Eastern tribes and the jave-

* Literally, the First Swordsman.

lins of the Moors, which are only fit to be playthings for children."

"You are exposed to no danger," said the soldier, closing up to Achilles in a confidential manner, "from which these axes can protect you."

"Do I not know it?" said Achilles. "But it is to your arm alone that the Follower of his Most Sacred Majesty now entrusts his safety."

"In aught that a soldier may do," answered Hereward; "make your own computation, and then reckon this single arm worth two against any man the Emperor has, not being of our own corps."

"Listen, my brave friend," continued Achilles. "This Nicanor was daring enough to throw a reproach on our noble corps, accusing them—gods and goddesses!—of plundering in the field, and, yet more sacrilegious, of drinking the precious wine which was prepared for his Most Sacred Majesty's own blessed consumption. I, the sacred person of the Emperor being present, proceeded, as thou mayest well believe——"

"To give him the lie in his audacious throat!" burst in the Varangian; "named a place of meeting somewhere in the vicinity, and called the attendance of your poor follower, Hereward of Hampton, who is your bond-slave for life long, for such an honor! I wish only you had told me to get my work-day arms; but, however, I have my battle-ax, and——" Here his companion seized a moment to break in, for he was somewhat abashed at the lively tone of the young soldier.

"Hush thee, my son," said Achilles Tatius—"speak low, my excellent Hereward. Thou mistakest this thing. With thee by my side, I would not, indeed, hesitate to meet five such as Nicanor; but such is not the law of this most hallowed empire, nor the sentiments of the three times illustrious prince who now rules it. Thou art debauched, my soldier, with the swaggering stories of the Franks, of whom we hear more and more every day."

"I would not willingly borrow anything from those whom you call Franks, and we Normans," answered the Varangian, in a disappointed, dogged tone.

"Why, listen, then," said the officer, as they proceeded on their walk—"listen to the reason of the thing, and consider whether such a custom can obtain, as that which they term the duello, in any country of civilization and common sense, to say nothing of one which is blessed with the domination

of the most rare Alexius Comnenus. Two great lords, or high officers, quarrel in the court, and before the reverend person of the Emperor. They dispute about a point of fact. Now, instead of each maintaining his own opinion, by argument or evidence, suppose they had adopted the custom of these barbarous Franks—'Why, thou liest in thy throat,' says the one; 'And thou liest in thy very lungs,' says another; and they measure forth the lists of battle in the next meadow. Each swears to the truth of his quarrel, though probably neither well knows precisely how the fact stands. One, perhaps the hardier, truer, and better man of the two, the Follower of the Emperor, and father of the Varangians—for death, my faithful follower, spares no man—lies dead on the ground, and the other comes back to predominate in the court, where, had the matter been inquired into by the rules of common sense and reason, the victor, as he is termed, would have been sent to the gallows. And yet this is the law of arms, as your fancy pleases to call it, friend Hereward!"

"May it please your valor," answered the barbarian, "there is a show of sense in what you say; but you will sooner convince me that this blessed moonlight is the blackness of a wolf's mouth than that I ought to hear myself called liar without cramming the epithet down the speaker's throat with the spike of my battle-ax. The lie is to a man the same as a blow, and a blow degrades him into a slave and a beast of burden, if endured without retaliation."

"Ay, there it is!" said Achilles; "could I but get you to lay aside that inborn barbarism, which leads you, otherwise the most disciplined soldiers who serve the Sacred Emperor, into such deadly quarrels and feuds——"

"Sir captain," said the Varangian, in a sullen tone, "take my advice, and take the Varangians as you have them; for, believe my word that, if you could teach them to endure reproaches, bear the lie, or tolerate stripes, you would hardly find them, when their discipline is completed, worth the single day's salt which they cost to his Holiness, if that be his title. I must tell you, moreover, valorous sir, that the Varangians will little thank their leader, who heard them called marauders, drunkards, and what not, and repelled not the charge on the spot."

"Now, if I knew not the humors of my barbarians," thought Tatius, in his own mind, "I should bring on myself a quarrel with these untamed islanders, who the Emperor thinks can be so easily kept in discipline. But I

will settle this sport presently." Accordingly, he addressed the Saxon in a soothing tone.

"My faithful soldier," he proceeded aloud, "we Romans, according to the custom of our ancestors, set as much glory on actually telling the truth as you do in resenting the imputation of falsehood; and I could not with honor return a charge of falsehood upon Nicanor, since what he said was substantially true."

"What! that we Varangians were plunderers, drunkards, and the like?" said Hereward, more impatient than before.

"No, surely, not in that broad sense," said Achilles; "but there was too much foundation for the legend."

"When and where?" asked the Anglo-Saxon.

"You remember," replied his leader, "the long march near Laodicea, where the Varangians beat off a cloud of Turks, and retook a train of the imperial baggage? You know what was done that day—how you quenched your thirst, I mean?"

"I have some reason to remember it," said Hereward of Hampton; "for we were half choked with dust, fatigue, and, which was worst of all, constantly fighting with our faces to the rear, when we found some firkins of wine in certain carriages which were broken down; down our throats it went, as if it had been the best ale in Southampton."

"Ah, unhappy!" said the Follower; "saw you not that the firkins were stamped with the thrice excellent grand butler's own inviolable seal, and set apart for the private use of his Imperial Majesty's most sacred lips?"

"By good St. George of Merry England, worth a dozen of your St. George of Cappadocia, I neither thought nor cared about the matter," answered Hereward. "And I know your valor drank a mighty draught yourself out of my head-piece; not this silver bauble, but my steel-cap, which is twice as ample. By the same token, that whereas before you were giving orders to fall back, you were a changed man when you had cleared your throat of the dust, and cried, 'Bide the other brunt, my brave and stout boys of Britain!'"

"Ay," said Achilles, "I know I am but too apt to be venturous in action. But you mistake, good Hereward: the wine I tasted in the extremity of martial fatigue was not that set apart for his Sacred Majesty's own peculiar mouth, but a secondary sort, preserved for the grand butler himself, of which, as one of the great officers of the house-

hold, I might right lawfully partake; the chance was nevertheless sinfully unhappy."

"On my life," replied Hereward, "I cannot see the infelicity of drinking when we are dying of thirst."

"But cheer up, my noble comrade," said Achilles, after he had hurried over his own exculpation, and without noticing the Varangian's light estimation of the crime, "his Imperial Majesty, in his ineffable graciousness, imputes these ill-advised draughts as a crime to no one who partook of them. He rebuked the Protospathaire for fishing up this accusation, and said, when he had recalled the bustle and confusion of that toilsome day, 'I thought myself well off amid that seven times heated furnace when we obtained a draught of the barley-wine drank by my poor Varangians; and I drank their health, as well I might, since, had it not been for their services, I had drunk my last; and well fare their hearts, though they quaffed my wine in return!' And with that he turned off, as one who said, 'I have too much of this, being a finding of matter and ripping up of stories against Achilles Tatius and his gallant Varangians.'"

"Now, may God bless his honest heart for it!" said Hereward, with more downright heartiness than formal respect. "I'll drink to his health in what I put next to my lips that quenches thirst, whether it may be ale, wine, or ditch-water."

"Why, well said, but speak not above thy breath, and remember to put thy hand to thy forehead when naming, or even thinking of, the Emperor. Well, thou knowest, Hereward, that, having thus obtained the advantage, I knew that the moment of a repulsed attack is always that of a successful charge; and so I brought against the Protospathaire, Nicanor, the robberies which have been committed at the Golden Gate, and other entrances of the city, where a merchant was but of late kidnapped and murdered, having on him certain jewels, the property of the Patriarch."

"Ay! indeed?" said the Varangian; "and what said Alex—— I mean the Most Sacred Emperor, when he heard such things said of the city warders, though he had himself given, as we say in our land, the fox the geese to keep?"

"It may be he did," replied Achilles; "but he is a sovereign of deep policy, and was resolved not to proceed against these treacherous warders, or their general, the Protospathaire, without decisive proof. His Sacred Majesty, therefore, charged me to obtain specific circumstantial proof by thy means."

"And that I would have managed in two minutes, had you not called me off the chase of yon cut-throat vagabond. But his Grace knows the word of a Varangian, and I can assure him that either lucre of my silver gaberdine, which they nickname a cuirass, or the hatred of my corps, would be sufficient to incite any of these knaves to cut the throat of a Varangian who appeared to be asleep. So we go, I suppose, captain, to bear evidence before the Emperor to this night's work?"

"No, my active soldier hadst thou taken the runaway villain, my first act must have been to set him free again; and my present charge to you is, to forget that such an adventure has ever taken place."

"Ha!" said the Varangian; "this is a change of policy indeed!"

"Why, yes, brave Hereward; ere I left the palace this night, the Patriarch made overtures of reconciliation betwixt me and the Protospathaire, which, as our agreement is of much consequence to the state, I could not very well reject, either as a good soldier or a good Christian. All offenses to my honor are to be in the fullest degree repaid, for which the Patriarch interposes his warrant. The Emperor, who will rather wink hard than see disagreements, loves better the matter should be slurred over thus."

"And the reproaches upon the Varangians——" said Hereward.

"Shall be fully retracted and atoned for," answered Achilles; "and a weighty donative in gold dealt among the corps of the Anglo-Danish axemen. Thou, my Hereward, mayst be distributor; and thus, if well managed, mayst plate thy battle-ax with gold."

"I love my ax better as it is," said the Varangian. "My father bore it against the robber Normans at Hastings. Steel instead of gold for my money."

"Thou mayst make thy choice, Hereward," answered his officer; "only, if thou art poor, say the fault was thine own."

But here, in the course of their circuit round Constantinople, the officer and the soldier came to a very small wicket or sally-port, opening on the interior of a large and massive advanced work, which terminated an entrance to the city itself. Here the officer halted, and made his obedience, as a devotee who is about to enter a chapel of peculiar sanctity

CHAPTER III

Here, youth, thy foot unbrace,
  Here, youth, thy brow unbraid,
Each tribute that may grace
  The threshold here be paid.
Walk with the stealthy pace
  Which Nature teaches deer,
When, echoing in the chase,
  The hunter's horn they hear.

The Court.

BEFORE entering, Achilles Tatius made various gesticulations, which were imitated roughly and awkwardly by the unpractised Varangian, whose service with his corps had been almost entirely in the field, his routine of duty not having, till very lately, called him to serve as one of the garrison of Constantinople. He was not, therefore, acquainted with the minute observances which the Greeks, who were the most formal and ceremonious soldiers and courtiers in the world, rendered not merely to the Greek emperor in person, but throughout the sphere which peculiarly partook of his influence.

Achilles, having gesticulated after his own fashion, at length touched the door with a rap, distinct at once and modest. This was thrice repeated, when the captain whispered to his attendant, "The interior!—for thy life, do as thou seest me do." At the same moment he started back, and stooping his head on his breast, with his hands over his eyes, as if to save them from being dazzled by an expected burst of light, awaited the answer to his summons. The Anglo-Dane, desirous to obey his leader, imitating him as near as he could, stood side by side in the posture, of Oriental humiliation. The little portal opened inwards, when no burst of light was seen, but four of the Varangians were made visible in the entrance, holding each his battle-ax, as if about to strike down the intruders who had disturbed the silence of their watch.

"Acoulouthos," said the leader, by way of password.

"Tatius and Acoulouthos," murmured the warders, as a countersign.

Each sentinel sunk his weapon.

Achilles then reared his stately crest, with a conscious dignity at making this display of court influence in the eyes of his soldiers. Hereward observed an undisturbed gravity, to the surprise of his officer, who marveled in his own mind how he could be such a barbarian as to regard with apathy a scene which had in his eyes the most impressive and peculiar awe. This indifference he imputed to the stupid insensibility of his companion.

They passed on between the sentinels, who wheeled backward in file, on each side of the portal, and gave the strangers entrance to a long narrow plank, stretched across the city moat, which was here drawn within the inclosure of an external rampart, projecting beyond the principal wall of the city.

"This," he whispered to Hereward, "is called the Bridge of Peril, and it is said that it has been occasionally smeared with oil, or strewed with dried peas, and that the bodies of men, known to have been in company with the Emperor's most sacred person, have been taken out of the Golden Horn,* into which the moat empties itself."

"I would not have thought," said the islander, rising his voice to its usual rough tone, "that Alexius Comnenus——'

"Hush, rash and regardless of your life!" said Achilles Tatius; "to awaken the daughter of the imperial arch † is to incur deep penalty at all times, but when a rash delinquent has disturbed her with reflections on his Most Sacred Highness the Emperor, death is a punishment far too light for the effrontery which has interrupted her blessed slumber. Ill hath been my fate, to have positive commands laid on me, enjoining me to bring into the sacred precincts a creature who hath no more of the salt of civilization in him than to keep his mortal frame from corruption, since of all mental culture he is totally incapable. Consider thyself, Hereward, and bethink thee what thou art,—by nature a poor barbarian—thy best boast that thou hast slain certain Mussulmans in thy sacred master's quarrel; and here art thou admitted into the inviolable inclosure of the Blacquernal, and in the hearing not only of the royal daughter of the imperial arch, which means," said the eloquent leader, "the echo of the sublime vaults, but—Heaven be our guide!—for what I know, within the natural hearing of the sacred ear itself!"

"Well, my captain," replied the Varangian, "I cannot

* The harbor of Constantinople.

† The 'daughter of the arch' was a courtly expression for the echo, as we find explained by the courtly commander himself.

presume to speak my mind after the fashion of the place; but I can easily suppose I am but ill qualified to converse in the presence of the court, nor do I mean therefore to say a word till I am spoken to, unless when I shall see no better company than ourselves. To be plain, I find difficulty in modeling my voice to a smoother tone than nature has given it; so, henceforth, my brave captain, I will be mute, unless when you give me a sign to speak."

"You will act wisely," said the captain. "Here be certain persons of high rank, nay, some that have been born in the purple itself, that will, Hereward—alas, for thee!—prepare to sound with the line of their courtly understanding the depths of thy barbarous and shallow conceit. Do not, therefore, then, join their graceful smiles with thy inhuman bursts of cachinnation, with which thou art wont to thunder forth when opening in chorus with thy messmates."

"I tell thee I will be silent," said the Varangian, moved somewhat beyond his mood. "If you trust my word, so; if you think I am a jackdaw that must be speaking, whether in or out of place and purpose, I am contented to go back again, and therein we can end the matter."

Achilles, conscious perhaps that it was his best policy not to drive his subaltern to extremity, lowered his tone somewhat in reply to the uncourtly note of the soldier, as if allowing something for the rude manners of one whom he considered as not easily matched among the Varangians themselves for strength and valor—qualities which, in despite of Hereward's discourtesy, Achilles suspected in his heart were fully more valuable than all those nameless graces which a more courtly and accomplished soldier might possess.

The expert navigator of the intricacies of the imperial residence carried the Varangian through two or three small complicated courts, forming a part of the extensive palace of the Blacquernal,* and entered the building itself by a side-door, watched in like manner by a sentinel of the Varangian Guard, whom they passed on being recognized. In the next apartment was stationed the Court of Guard, where were certain soldiers of the same corps amusing themselves at games somewhat resembling the modern draughts and dice, while they seasoned their pastime with frequent applications to deep flagons of ale, which were furnished to them while passing away their hours of duty. Some glances passed

* This palace derived its name from the neighboring Blachernian gate and bridge.

between Hereward and his comrades, and he would have joined them, or at least spoke to them; for, since the adventure of the Mitylenian, Hereward had rather thought himself annoyed than distinguished by his moonlight ramble in the company of his commander, excepting always the short and interesting period during which he conceived they were on the way to fight a duel. Still, however negligent in the strict observance of the ceremonies of the sacred palace, the Varangians had, in their own way, rigid notions of calculating their military duty; in consequence of which, Hereward, without speaking to his companions, followed his leader through the guard-room, and one or two ante-chambers adjacent, the splendid and luxurious furniture of which convinced him that he could be nowhere else save in the sacred residence of his master the Emperor.

At length, having traversed passages and apartments with which the captain seemed familiar, and which he threaded with a stealthy, silent, and apparently a reverential, pace, as if, in his own inflated phrase, afraid to awaken the sounding echoes of those lofty and monumental halls, another species of inhabitants began to be visible. In different entrances, and in different apartments, the Northern soldier beheld those unfortunate slaves, chiefly of African descent, raised occasionally under the emperors of Greece to great power and honors, who, in that respect, imitated one of the most barbarous points of Oriental despotism. These slaves were differently occupied—some standing, as if on guard, at gates or in passages, with their drawn sabres in their hands; some were sitting in the Oriental fashion, on carpets, reposing themselves, or playing at various games, all of a character profoundly silent. Not a word passed between the guide of Hereward and the withered and deformed beings whom they thus encountered. The exchange of a glance with the principal soldier seemed all that was necessary to ensure both an uninterrupted passage.

After making their way through several apartments, empty or thus occupied, they at length entered one of black marble, or some other dark-colored stone, much loftier and longer than the rest. Side passages opened into it, so far as the islander could discern, descending from several portals in the wall; but as the oils and gums with which the lamps in these passages were fed diffused a dim vapor around, it was difficult to ascertain, from the imperfect light, either the shape of the hall or the style of its architecture. At the upper and lower ends of the chamber there was a stronger

and clearer light. It was when they were in the middle of this huge and long apartment that Achilles said to the soldier, in the sort of cautionary whisper which he appeared to have substituted in place of his natural voice since he had crossed the Bridge of Peril—

"Remain here till I return, and stir from this hall on no account."

"To hear is to obey," answered the Varangian, an expression of obedience which, like many other phrases and fashions, the empire, which still affected the name of Roman, had borrowed from the barbarians of the East. Achilles Tatius then hastened up the steps which led to one of the side-doors of the hall, which being slightly pressed, its noiseless hinge gave way and admitted him.

Left alone to amuse himself as he best could, within the limits permitted to him, the Varangian visited in succession both ends of the hall, where the objects were more visible than elsewhere. The lower end had in its center a small low-browed door of iron. Over it was displayed the Greek crucifix in bronze, and around and on every side the representation of shackles, fetterbolts, and the like were also executed in bronze, and disposed as appropriate ornaments over the entrance. The door of the dark archway was half open, and Hereward naturally looked in, the orders of his chief not prohibiting his satisfying his curiosity thus far. A dense red light, more like a distant spark than a lamp, affixed to the wall of what seemed a very narrow and winding stair, resembling in shape and size a draw-well, the verge of which opened on the threshold of the iron door, showed a descent which seemed to conduct to the infernal regions. The Varangian, however obtuse he might be considered by the quick-witted Greeks, had no difficulty in comprehending that a staircase having such a gloomy appearance, and the access to which was by a portal decorated in such a melancholy style of architecture, could only lead to the dungeons of the imperial palace, the size and complicated number of which were neither the least remarkable nor the least awe-imposing portion of the sacred edifice. Listening profoundly, he even thought he caught such accents as befit those graves of living men, the faint echoing of groans and sighs, sounding as it were from the deep abyss beneath. But in this respect his fancy probably filled up the sketch which his conjectures bodied out.

"I have done nothing," he thought, "to merit being immured in one of these subterranean dens. Surely, though

my captain, Achilles Tatius, is, under favor, little better than an ass, he cannot be so false of word as to train me to prison under false pretexts ? I trow he shall first see for the last time how the English ax plays, if such is to be the sport of the evening. But let us see the upper end of this enormous vault ; it may bear a better omen."

Thus thinking, and not quite ruling the tramp of his armed footstep according to the ceremonies of the place, the large-limbed Saxon strode to the upper end of the black marble hall. The ornament of the portal here was a small altar, like those in the temples of the heathen deities, which projected above the center of the arch. On this altar smoked incense of some sort, the fumes of which rose curling in a thin cloud to the roof, and thence extending through the hall, enveloped in its column of smoke a singular emblem, of which the Varangian could make nothing. It was the representation of two human arms and hands, seeming to issue from the wall, having the palms extended and open, as about to confer some boon on those who approached the altar. These arms were formed of bronze, and, being placed farther back than the altar with its incense, were seen through the curling smoke by lamps so disposed as to illuminate the whole archway. "The meaning of this," thought the simple barbarian, "I should well know how to explain were these fists clenched, and were the hall dedicated to the *pancration*, which we call boxing ; but as even these helpless Greeks use not their hands without their fingers being closed, by St. George, I can make out nothing of their meaning."

At this instant Achilles entered the black marble hall at the same door by which he had left it, and came up to his neophyte, as the Varangian might be termed.

"Come with me now, Hereward, for here approaches the thick of the onset. Now display the utmost courage that thou canst summon up, for, believe me, thy credit and name also depend on it."

"Fear nothing for either," said Hereward, "if the heart or hand of one man can bear him through the adventure by the help of a toy like this."

"Keep thy voice low and submissive, I have told thee a score of times," said the leader, "and lower thine ax, which, as I bethink me, thou hadst better leave in the outer apartment."

"With your leave, noble captain," replied Hereward, "I am unwilling to lay aside my bread-winner. I am one of

those awkward clowns who cannot behave seemly unless I have something to occupy my hands, and my faithful battle-ax comes most natural to me."

"Keep, it then; but remember thou dash it not about according to thy custom, nor bellow, nor shout, nor cry as in a battle-field; think of the sacred character of the place, which exaggerates riot into blasphemy, and remember the persons whom thou mayest chance to see, an offense to some of whom, it may be, ranks in the same sense with blasphemy against Heaven itself."

This lecture carried the tutor and the pupil so far as to the side-door, and thence inducted them into a species of ante-room, from which Achilles led his Varangian forward, until a pair of folding-doors, opening into what proved to be a principal apartment of the palace, exhibited to the rough-hewn native of the North a sight equally new and surprising.

It was an apartment of the palace of the Blacquernal, dedicated to the special service of the beloved daughter of the Emperor Alexius, the Princess Anna Comnena, known to our times by her literary talents, which record the history of her father's reign. She was seated, the queen and sovereign of a literary circle, such as an imperial princess *porphyroganita*, or born in the sacred purple chamber itself, could assemble in those days, and a glance around will enable us to form an idea of her guests, or companions.

The literary princess herself had the bright eyes, straight features, and comely and pleasing manners which all would have allowed to the Emperor's daughter, even if she could not have been, with severe truth, said to have possessed them. She was placed upon a small bench or sofa, the fair sex here not being permitted to recline, as was the fashion of the Roman ladies. A table before her was loaded with books, plants, herbs, and drawings. She sat on a slight elevation, and those who enjoyed the intimacy of the Princess, or to whom she wished to speak in particular, were allowed, during such sublime colloquy, to rest their knees on the little dais or elevated place where her chair found its station, in a posture half standing, half kneeling. Three other seats, of different heights, were placed on the dais and under the same canopy of state which overshadowed that of the Princess Anna.

The first, which strictly resembled her own chair in size and convenience, was one designed for her husband, Nicephorus Briennius. He was said to entertain or affect the

greatest respect for his wife's erudition, though the courtiers were of opinion he would have liked to absent himself from her evening parties more frequently than was particularly agreeable to the Princess Anna and her imperial parents. This was partly explained by the private tattle of the court, which averred that the Princess Anna Comnena had been more beautiful when she was less learned, and that, though still a fine woman, she had somewhat lost the charms of her person as she became enriched in her mind.

To atone for the lowly fashion of the seat of Nicephorus Briennius, it was placed as near to his princess as it could possibly be edged by the ushers, so that she might not lose one look of her handsome spouse, nor he the least particle of wisdom which might drop from the lips of his erudite consort.

Two other seats of honor, or rather thrones—for they had footstools placed for the support of the feet, rests for the arms, and embroidered pillows for the comfort of the back, not to mention the glories of the outspreading canopy—were destined for the imperial couple, who frequently attended their daughter's studies, which she prosecuted in public in the way we have intimated. On such occasions, the Empress Irene enjoyed the triumph peculiar to the mother of an accomplished daughter, while Alexius, as it might happen, sometimes listened with complacence to the rehearsal of his own exploits in the inflated language of the Princess, and sometimes mildly nodded over her dialogues upon the mysteries of philosophy with the Patriarch Zosimus and other sages.

All these four distinguished seats for the persons of the imperial family were occupied at the moment which we have described, excepting that which ought to have been filled by Nicephorus Briennius, the husband of the fair Anna Comnena. To his negligence and absence was perhaps owing the angry spot on the brow of his fair bride. Beside her on the platform were two white-robed nymphs of her household—female slaves, in a word—who reposed themselves on their knees on cushions, when their assistance was not wanted as a species of living book-desks, to support and extend the parchment rolls in which the Princess recorded her own wisdom, or from which she quoted that of others. One of these young maidens, called Astarte, was so distinguished as a calligrapher, or beautiful writer of various alphabets and languages, that she narrowly escaped being

sent as a present to the Caliph (who could neither read nor write), at a time when it was necessary to bribe him into peace. Violante, usually called the Muse, the other attendant of the Princess, a mistress of the vocal and instrumental art of music, was actually sent in a compliment to soothe the temper of Robert Guiscard, the Archduke of Apulia, who being aged and stone-deaf, and the girl under ten years old at the time, returned the valued present to the imperial donor, and with the selfishness which was one of that wily Norman's characteristics, desired to have some one sent him who could contribute to his pleasure, instead of a twangling, squalling infant.

Beneath these elevated seats there sat, or reposed on the floor of the hall, such favorites as were admitted. The Patriarch Zosimus, and one or two old men, were permitted the use of certain lowly stools, which were the only seats prepared for the learned members of the Princess's evening parties, as they would have been called in our days. As for the younger magnates, the honor of being permitted to join the imperial conversation was expected to render them far superior to the paltry accommodation of a joint-stool. Five or six courtiers, of different dress and ages, might compose the party, who either stood, or relieved their posture by kneeling, along the verge of an adorned fountain, which shed a mist of such very small rain as to dispel almost insensibly, cooling the fragrant breeze which breathed from the flowers and shrubs, that were so disposed as to send a waste of sweets around. One goodly old man, named Michael Agelastes, big, burly, and dressed like an ancient Cynic philosopher, was distinguished by assuming, in a great measure, the ragged garb and mad bearing of that sect, and by his inflexible practise of the strictest ceremonies exigible by the imperial family. He was known by an affectation of cynical principle and language, and of republican philosophy, strangely contradicted by his practical deference to the great. It was wonderful how long this man, now sixty, [seventy] years old and upwards, disdained to avail himself of the accustomed privilege of leaning or supporting his limbs, and with what regularity he maintained either the standing posture or that of absolute kneeling; but the first was so much his usual attitude, that he acquired among his court friends the name of Elephas, or the Elephant, because the ancients had an idea that the half-reasoning animal, as it is called, has joints incapable of kneeling down.

"Yet I have seen them kneel when I was in the country

of the Gymnosophists," said a person present on the evening of Hereward's introduction.

"To take up their master on their shoulders? so will ours," said the Patriarch Zosimus, with the slight sneer which was the nearest advance to a sarcasm that the etiquette of the Greek court permitted; for on all ordinary occasions it would not have offended the presence more surely literally to have drawn a poniard than to exchange a repartee in the imperial circle. Even the sarcasm, such as it was, would have been thought censurable by that ceremonious court in any but the Patriarch, to whose high rank some license was allowed.

Just as he had thus far offended decorum, Achilles Tatius and his soldier Hereward entered the apartment. The former bore him with even more than his usual degree of courtliness, as if to set his own good-breeding off by a comparison with the inexpert bearing of his follower; while, nevertheless, he had a secret pride in exhibiting, as one under his own immediate and distinct command, a man whom he was accustomed to consider as one of the finest soldiers in the army of Alexius, whether appearance or reality were to be considered.

Some astonishment followed the abrupt entrance of the newcomers. Achilles indeed glided into the presence with the easy and quiet extremity of respect which intimated his habitude in these regions. But Hereward started on his entrance, and, perceiving himself in company of the court, hastily strove to remedy his disorder. His commander, throwing round a scarce visible shrug of apology, made then a confidential and monitory sign to Hereward to mind his conduct. What he meant was, that he should doff his helmet and fall prostrate on the ground. But the Anglo-Saxon, unaccustomed to interpret obscure inferences, naturally thought of his military duties, and advanced in front of the Emperor, as when he rendered his military homage. He made reverence with his knee, half touched his cap, and then recovering and shouldering his ax, stood in advance of the imperial chair, as if on duty as a sentinel.

A gentle smile of surprise went round the circle as they gazed on the manly appearance, and somewhat unceremonious, but martial deportment of the Northern soldier. The various spectators around consulted the Emperor's face, not knowing whether they were to take the intrusive manner of the Varangian's entrance as matter of ill-breeding, and manifest their horror, or whether they ought rather to con-

sider the bearing of the life-guardsman as indicating blunt and manly zeal, and therefore to be received with applause.

It was some little time ere the Emperor recovered himself sufficiently to strike a key-note, as was usual upon such occasions. Alexius Comnenus had been wrapt for a moment into some species of slumber, or at least absence of mind. Out of this he had been startled by the sudden appearance of the Varangian ; for, though he was accustomed to commit the outer guards of the palace to this trusty corps, yet the deformed blacks whom we have mentioned, and who sometimes rose to be ministers of state and commanders of armies, were, on all ordinary occasions, entrusted with the guard of the interior of the palace. Alexius, therefore, awakened from his slumber, and the military phrase of his daughter still ringing in his ears, as she was reading a description of the great historical work in which she had detailed the conflicts of his reign, felt somewhat unprepared for the entrance and military deportment of one of the Saxon guard, with whom he was accustomed to associate, in general, scenes of blows, danger, and death.

After a troubled glance around, his look rested on Achilles Tatius. "Why here," he said, "trusty Follower ? why this soldier here at this time of night ?" Here, of course, was the moment for modeling the visages *regis ad exemplum ;* but, ere the Patriarch could frame his countenance into devout apprehension of danger, Achilles Tatius had spoken a word or two, which reminded Alexius's memory that the soldier had been brought there by his own special orders. "Oh, ay ! true, good fellow," said he, smoothing his troubled brow ; "we had forgot that passage among the cares of state." He then spoke to the Varangian with a countenance more frank, and a heartier accent, than he used to his courtiers ; for, to a despotic monarch, a faithful life-guardsman is a person of confidence, while an officer of high rank is always in some degree a subject of distrust. "Ha !" said he, "our worthy Anglo-Dane, how fares he ?" This unceremonious salutation surprised all but him to whom it was addressed. Hereward answered, accompanying his words with a military obeisance which partook of heartiness rather than reverence, with a loud unsubdued voice, which startled the presence still more that the language was Saxon, which these foreigners occasionally used, "*Waes hael, Kaisar mirrig und machtigh !*"—that is, "Be of good health, stout

and mighty Emperor." The Emperor, with a smile of intelligence, to show he could speak to his guards in their own foreign language, replied by the well-known countersignal—"*Drinc hael!*"

Immediately a page brought a silver goblet of wine. The Emperor put his lips to it, though he scarce tasted the liquor, then commanded it to be handed to Hereward, and bade the soldier drink. The Saxon did not wait till he was desired a second time, but took off the contents without hesitation. A gentle smile, decorous as the presence required, passed over the assembly at a feat which, though by no means wonderful in a hyperborean, seemed prodigious in the estimation of the moderate Greeks. Alexius himself laughed more loudly than his courtiers thought might be becoming on their part, and mustering what few words of Varangian he possessed, which he eked out with Greek, demanded of his life-guardsman—"Well, my bold Briton, or Edward, as men call thee, dost thou know the flavor of that wine?"

"Yes," answered the Varangian, without change of countenance, "I tasted it once before at Laodicea——"

Here his officer, Achilles Tatius, became sensible that his soldier approached delicate ground, and in vain endeavored to gain his attention, in order that he might furtively convey to him a hint to be silent, or at least take heed what he said in such a presence. But the soldier, who, with proper military observance, continued to have his eye and attention fixed on the Emperor, as the prince whom he was bound to answer or to serve, saw none of the hints, which Achilles at length suffered to become so broad, that Zosimus and the Protospathaire exchanged expressive glances, as calling on each other to notice the by-play of the leader of the Varangians.

In the meanwhile, the dialogue between the Emperor and his soldier continued:—"How," said Alexius, "did this draught relish, compared with the former?"

"There is fairer company here, my liege, than that of the Arabian archers," answered Hereward, with a look and bow of instinctive good-breeding. "Nevertheless, there lacks the flavor which the heat of the sun, the dust of the combat, with the fatigue of wielding such a weapon as this (advancing his ax) for eight hours together, give to a cup of rare wine."

"Another deficiency there might be," said Agelastes the Elephant, "provided I am pardoned hinting at it," he added,

"The Saxon did not wait until he was desired a second time, but took off the contents without hesitation."

with a look to the throne : "it might be the smaller size of the cup compared with that at Laodicea."

"By Taranis, you say true," answered the life-guardsman ; "at Laodicea I used my helmet."

"Let us see the cups compared together, good friend," said Agelastes, continuing his raillery, "that we may be sure thou hast not swallowed the present goblet; for I thought, from the manner of the draught, there was a chance of its going down with its contents."

"There are some things which I do not easily swallow," answered the Varangian, in a calm and indifferent tone ; "but they must come from a younger and more active man than you."

The company again smiled to each other, as if to hint that the philosopher, though also parcel wit by profession, had the worst of the encounter.

The Emperor at the same time interfered—"Nor did I send for thee hither, good fellow, to be baited by idle taunts."

Here Agelastes shrunk back in the circle, as a hound that has been rebuked by the huntsman for babbling ; and the Princess Anna Comnena, who had indicated by her fair features a certain degree of impatience, at length spoke—"Will it then please you, my imperial and much-beloved father, to inform those blessed with admission to the Muses' temple for what it is that you have ordered this soldier to be this night admitted to a place so far above his rank in life ? Permit me to say, we ought not to waste, in frivolous and silly jests, the time which is sacred to the welfare of the empire, as every moment of your leisure must be."

"Our daughter speaks wisely," said the Empress Irene, who, like most mothers who do not possess much talent themselves, and are not very capable of estimating it in others, was, nevertheless, a great admirer of her favorite daughter's accomplishments, and ready to draw them out on all occasions. "Permit me to remark, that in this divine and selected palace of the Muses, dedicated to the studies of our well-beloved and highly-gifted daughter, whose pen will preserve your reputation, our most imperial husband, till the desolation of the universe, and which enlivens and delights this society, the very flower of the wits of our sublime court—permit me to say, that we have, merely by admitting a single life-guardsman, given our conversation the character of that which distinguishes a barrack."

Now the Emperor Alexius Comnenus had the same feel-

ing with many an honest man in ordinary life when his wife begins a long oration, especially as the Empress Irene did not always retain the observance consistent with his awful rule and right supremacy, although especially severe in exacting it from all others in reference to her lord. Therefore, though he had felt some pleasure in gaining a short release from the monotonous recitation of the Princess's history, he now saw the necessity of resuming it, or of listening to the matrimonial eloquence of the Empress. He sighed, therefore, as he said, "I crave your pardon, good our imperial spouse, and our daughter born in the purple chamber. I remember me, our most amiable and accomplished daughter, that last night you wished to know the particulars of the battle of Laodicea with the heathenish Arabs, whom Heaven confound. And for certain considerations which moved ourselves to add other inquiries to our own recollection, Achilles Tatius, our most trusty Follower, was commissioned to introduce into this place one of those soldiers under his command, being such a one whose courage and presence of mind could best enable him to remark what passed around him on that remarkable and bloody day. And this I suppose to be the man brought to us for that purpose."

"If I am permitted to speak and live," answered the Follower, "your Imperial Highness, with those divine Princesses, whose name is to us as those of blessed saints, have in your presence the flower of my Anglo-Danes, or whatsoever unbaptized name is given to my soldiers. He is, as I may say, a barbarian of barbarians; for although in birth and breeding unfit to soil with his feet the carpet of this precinct of accomplishment and eloquence, he is so brave, so trusty, so devotedly attached, and so unhesitatingly zealous, that——"

"Enough, good Follower," said the Emperor; "let us only know that he is cool and observant, not confused and fluttered during close battle, as we have sometimes observed in you and other great commanders, and, to speak truth, have even felt in our imperial self on extraordinary occasions; which difference in man's constitution is not owing to any inferiority of courage, but, in us, to a certain consciousness of the importance of our own safety to the welfare of the whole, and to a feeling of the number of duties which at once devolve on us. Speak then, and speak quickly, Tatius; for I discern that our dearest consort, and our thrice fortunate daughter born in the imperial chamber of purple, seem to wax somewhat impatient."

"Hereward," answered Tatius, "is as composed and observant in battle as another in a festive dance. The dust of war is the breath of his nostrils; and he will prove his worth in combat against any four others, Varangians excepted, who shall term themselves your Imperial Highness's bravest servants."

"Follower," said the Emperor, with a displeased look and tone, "instead of instructing these poor, ignorant barbarians in the rules and civilization of our enlightened empire, you foster, by such boastful words, the idle pride and fury of their temper, which hurries them into brawls with the legions of other foreign countries, and even breeds quarrels among themselves."

"If my mouth may be opened in the way of most humble excuse," said the Follower, "I would presume to reply, that I but an hour hence [since] talked with this poor ignorant Anglo-Dane on the paternal care with which the Imperial Majesty of Greece regards the preservation of that concord which unites the followers of his standard, and how desirous he is to promote that harmony, more especially amongst the various nations who have the happiness to serve you, in spite of the bloodthirsty quarrels of the Franks and other Northern men, who are never free from civil broil. I think the poor youth's understanding can bear witness to this much in my behalf." He then looked towards Hereward, who gravely inclined his head in token of assent to what his captain said. His excuse thus ratified, Achilles proceeded in his apology more firmly. "What I have said even now was spoken without consideration; for, instead of pretending that this Hereward would face four of your Imperial Highness's servants, I ought to have said that he was willing to defy six of your Imperial Majesty's most deadly *enemies*, and permit them to choose every circumstance of time, arms, and place of combat."

"That hath a better sound," said the Emperor; "and in truth, for the information of my dearest daughter, who piously has undertaken to record the things which I have been the blessed means of doing for the empire, I earnestly wish that she should remember, that though the sword of Alexius hath not slept in its sheath, yet he hath never sought his own aggrandizement of fame at the price of bloodshed among his subjects."

"I trust," said Anna Comnena, "that, in my humble sketch of the life of the princely sire from whom I derive my existence, I have not forgot to notice his love of peace,

and care for the lives of his soldiery, and abhorrence of the bloody manners of the heretic Franks, as one of his most distinguishing characteristics."

Assuming then an attitude more commanding, as one who was about to claim the attention of the company, the Princess inclined her head gently around to the audience, and taking a roll of parchment from the fair amanuensis, which she had, in a most beautiful handwriting, engrossed to her mistress's dictation, Anna Comnena prepared to read its contents.

At this moment, the eyes of the Princess rested for an instant on the barbarian Hereward, to whom she deigned this greeting—"Valiant barbarian, of whom my fancy recalls some memory, as if in a dream, thou art now to hear a work which, if the author be put into comparison with the subject, might be likened to a portrait of Alexander, in executing which some inferior dauber has usurped the pencil of Apelles; but which essay, however it may appear unworthy of the subject in the eyes of many, must yet command some envy in those who candidly consider its contents, and the difficulty of portraying the great personage concerning whom it is written. Still, I pray thee, give thine attention to what I have now to read, since this account of the battle of Laodicea, the details thereof being principally derived from his Imperial Highness, my excellent father, from the altogether valiant Protospathaire, his invincible general, together with Achilles Tatius, the faithful Follower of our victorious Emperor, may nevertheless be in some circumstances inaccurate. For it is to be thought, that the high offices of those great commanders retained them at a distance from some particularly active parts of the fray, in order that they might have more cool and accurate opportunity to form a judgment upon the whole, and transmit their orders, without being disturbed by any thoughts of personal safety. Even so, brave barbarian, in the art of embroidery—marvel not that we are a proficient in that mechanical process, since it is patronized by Minerva, whose studies we affect to follow—we reserve to ourselves the superintendence of the entire web, and commit to our maidens and others the execution of particular parts. Thus, in the same manner, thou, valiant Varangian, being engaged in the very thickest of the affray before Laodicea, mayst point out to us, the unworthy historian of so renowned a war, those chances which befell where men fought hand to hand, and where the fate of war was decided by the edge of the sword. Therefore,

dread not, thou bravest of the ax-men to whom we owe that victory, and so many others, to correct any mistake or misapprehension which we may have been led into concerning the details of that glorious event."

"Madam," said the Varangian, "I shall attend with diligence to what your Highness may be pleased to read to me; although, as to presuming to blame the history of a princess born in the purple, far be such a presumption from me; still less would it become a barbaric Varangian to pass a judgment on the military conduct of the Emperor, by whom he is liberally paid, or of the commander, by whom he is well treated. Before an action, if our advice is rebuired, it is ever faithfully tendered; but, according to my rough wit, our censure after the field is fought would be more invidious than useful. Touching the Protospathaire, if it be the duty of a general to absent himself from close action, I can safely say, or swear, were it necessary, that the invincible commander was never seen by me within a javelin's cast of aught that looked like danger."

This speech, boldly and bluntly delivered, had a general effect on the company present. The Emperor himself and Achilles Tatius looked like men who had got off from a danger better than they expected. The Protospathaire labored to conceal a movement of resentment. Agelastes whispered to the Patriarch, near whom he was placed, "The Northern battle-ax lacks neither point nor edge."

"Hush!" said Zosimus, "let us hear how this is to end: the Princess is about to speak."

CHAPTER IV

We heard the tecbir, so these Arabs call
Their shout of onset, when with loud acclaim
They challenged Heaven, as if demanding conquest.
The battle join'd, and, through the barb'rous herd,
"Fight—fight!" and "Paradise!" was all their cry.

The Siege of Damascus.

THE voice of the Northern soldier, although modified by feelings of respect to the Emperor, and even attachment to his captain, had more of a tone of blunt sincerity, nevertheless, than was usually heard by the sacred echoes of the imperial palace; and though the Princess Anna Comnena began to think that she had invoked the opinion of a severe judge, she was sensible, at the same time, by the deference of his manner, that his respect was of a character more real, and his applause, should she gain it, would prove more truly flattering, than the gilded assent of the whole court of her father. She gazed with some surprise and attention on Hereward, already described as a very handsome young man, and felt the natural desire to please which is easily created in the mind towards a fine person of the other sex. His attitude was easy and bold, but neither clownish nor uncourtly. His title of a barbarian placed him at once free from the forms of civilized life and the rules of artificial politeness. But his character for valor, and the noble self-confidence of his bearing, gave him a deeper interest than would have been acquired by a more studied and anxious address, or an excess of reverential awe.

In short, the Princess Anna Comnena, high in rank as she was, and born in the imperial purple, which she herself deemed the first of all attributes, felt herself, nevertheless, in preparing to resume the recitation of her history, more anxious to obtain the approbation of this rude soldier than that of all the rest of the courteous audience. She knew them well, it is true, and felt nowise solicitous about the applause which the daughter of the Emperor was sure to receive with full hands from those of the Grecian court to whom she might choose to communicate the productions of her father's daughter. But she had now a judge of a new

character, whose applause, if bestowed, must have something in it intrinsically real, since it could only be obtained by affecting his head or his heart.

It was perhaps under the influence of these feelings that the Princess was somewhat longer than usual in finding out the passage in the roll of history at which she proposed to commence. It was also noticed that she began her recitation with a diffidence and embarrassment surprising to the noble hearers, who had often seen her in full possession of her presence of mind before what they conceived a more distinguished, and even more critical, audience.

Neither were the circumstances of the Varangian such as rendered the scene indifferent to him. Anna Comnena had indeed attained her fifth luster, and that is a period after which Grecian beauty is understood to commence its decline. How long she had passed that critical period was a secret to all but the trusted ward-women of the purple chamber. Enough, that it was affirmed by the popular tongue, and seemed to be attested by that bent towards philosophy and literature, which is not supposed to be congenial to beauty in its earlier buds, to amount to one or two years more. She might be seven-and-twenty.

Still Anna Comnena was, or had very lately been, a beauty of the very first rank, and must be supposed to have still retained charms to captivate a barbarian of the North; if, indeed, he himself was not careful to maintain an heedful recollection of the immeasurable distance between them. Indeed, even this recollection might hardly have saved Hereward from the charms of this enchantress, bold, free-born, and fearless as he was; for, during that time of strange revolutions, there were many instances of successful generals sharing the couch of imperial princesses, whom perhaps they had themselves rendered widows, in order to make way for their own pretensions. But, besides the influence of other recollections, which the reader may learn hereafter, Hereward, though flattered by the unusual degree of attention which the Princess bestowed upon him, saw in her only the daughter of his Emperor and adopted liege lord, and the wife of a noble prince, whom reason and duty alike forbade him to think of in any other light.

It was after one or two preliminary efforts that the Princess Anna began her reading, with an uncertain voice, which gained strength and fortitude as she proceeded with the following passage from a well-known part of her history of Alexius Comnenus, but which unfortunately has not been

republished in the Byzantine historians. The narrative cannot, therefore, be otherwise than acceptable to the antiquarian reader; and the Author hopes to receive the thanks of the learned world for the recovery of a curious fragment, which, without his exertions, must probably have passed to the gulf of total oblivion.

The Retreat of Laodicea.

NOW FIRST PUBLISHED FROM THE GREEK OF THE PRINCESS COMNENA'S HISTORY OF HER FATHER.

"The sun had betaken himself to his bed in the ocean, ashamed, it would seem, to see the immortal army of our Most Sacred Emperor Alexius surrounded by those barbarous hordes of unbelieving barbarians who, as described in our last chapter, had occupied the various passes both in front and rear of the Romans,* secured during the preceding night by the wily barbarians. Although, therefore, a triumphant course of advance had brought us to this point, it now became a serious and doubtful question whether our victorious eagles might be able to penetrate any farther into the country of the enemy, or even to retreat with safety into their own.

"The extensive acquaintance of the Emperor with military affairs, in which he exceeds most living princes, had induced him, on the preceding evening, to ascertain, with marvelous exactitude and foresight, the precise position of the enemy. In this most necessary service he employed certain light-armed barbarians, whose habits and discipline had been originally derived from the wilds of Syria; and, if I am required to speak according to the dictation of truth, seeing she ought always to sit upon the pen of a historian, I must needs say they were infidels like their enemies; faithfully attached, however, to the Roman service, and, as I believe, true slaves, of the Emperor, to whom they communicated the information required by him respecting the position of his dreaded opponent Jezdegerd. These men did not bring in their information till long after the hour when the Emperor usually betook himself to rest.

"Notwithstanding this derangement of his most sacred time, our imperial father, who had postponed the ceremony of disrobing, so important were the necessities of the mo-

* More properly termed the Greeks; but we follow the phraseology of the fair authoress.

ment, continued, until deep in the night, to hold a council of his wisest chiefs, men whose depth of judgment might have saved a sinking world, and who now consulted what was to be done under the pressure of the circumstances in which they were now placed. And so great was the urgency, that all ordinary observances of the household were set aside, since I have heard from those who witnessed the fact, that the royal bed was displayed in the very room where the council assembled, and that the sacred lamp, called the Light of the Council, and which always burns when the Emperor presides in person over the deliberations of his servants, was for that night—a thing unknown in our annals—fed with unperfumed oil!"

The fair speaker here threw her fine form into an attitude which expressed holy horror, and the hearers intimated their sympathy in the exciting cause by corresponding signs of interest; as to which we need only say, that the sigh of Achilles Tatius was the most pathetic; while the groan of Agelastes the Elephant was deepest and most tremendously bestial in its sound. Hereward seemed little moved, except by a slight motion of surprise at the wonder expressed by the others. The Princess, having allowed due time for the sympathy of her hearers to exhibit itself, proceeded as follows:—

"In this melancholy situation, when even the best-established and most sacred rites of the imperial household gave way to the necessity of a hasty provision for the morrow, the opinions of the counselors were different, according to their tempers and habits—a thing, by the way, which may be remarked as likely to happen among the best and wisest on such occasions of doubt and danger.

"I do not in this place put down the names and opinions of those whose counsels were proposed and rejected, herein paying respect to the secrecy and freedom of debate justly attached to the imperial cabinet. Enough it is to say, that some there were who advised a speedy attack upon the enemy, in the direction of our original advance. Others thought it was safer, and might be easier, to force our way to the rear, and retreat by the same course which had brought us hither; nor must it be concealed that there were persons of unsuspected fidelity who proposed a third course, safer indeed than the others, but totally alien to the mind of our most magnanimous father. They recommended that a confidential slave, in company with a minister of the interior of our imperial palace, should be sent to the tent of Jezdegerd, in

order to ascertain upon what terms the barbarian would permit our triumphant father to retreat in safety at the head of his victorious army. On learning such opinion, our imperial father was heard to exclaim, "Sancta Sophia!" being the nearest approach to an adjuration which he has been known to permit himself, and was apparently about to say something violent both concerning the dishonor of the advice and the cowardice of those by whom it was preferred, when, recollecting the mutability of human things, and the misfortune of several of his Majesty's gracious predecessors, some of whom had been compelled to surrender their sacred persons to the infidels in the same region, his Imperial Majesty repressed his generous feelings, and only suffered his army counselors to understand his sentiments by a speech, in which he declared so desperate and so dishonorable a course would be the last which he would adopt even in the last extremity of danger. Thus did the judgment of this mighty prince at once reject counsel that seemed shameful to his arms, and thereby encourage the zeal of his troops, while privately he kept this postern in reserve, which in utmost need might serve for a safe, though not altogether, in less urgent circumstances, an honorable, retreat.

"When the discussion had reached this melancholy crisis, the renounced Achilles Tatius arrived with hopeful intelligence that he himself and some soldiers of his corps had discovered an opening on the left flank of our present encampment, by which making, indeed, a considerable circuit, but reaching, if we marched with vigor, the town of Laodicea, we might, by falling back on our resources, be in some measure in surety from the enemy.

"So soon as this ray of hope darted on the troubled mind of our gracious father, he proceeded to make such arrangements as might secure the full benefit of the advantage. His Imperial Highness would not permit the brave Varangians, whose battle-axes he accounted the flower of his imperial army, to take the advanced post of assailants on the present occasion. He repressed the love of battle by which these generous foreigners have been at all times distinguished, and directed that the Syrian forces in the army, who have been before mentioned, should be assembled with as little noise as possible in the vicinity of the deserted pass, with instructions to occupy it. The good genius of the empire suggested that, as their speech, arms, and appearance resembled those of the enemy, they might be permitted unopposed to take post in the defile with their light-armed forces, and thus secure it

for the passage of the rest of the army, of which he proposed that the Varangians, as immediately attached to his own sacred person, should form the vanguard. The well-known battalions termed the Immortals* came next, comprising the gross of the army, and forming the center and rear. Achilles Tatius, the faithful Follower of his royal master, although mortified that he was not permitted to assume the charge of the rear, which he had proposed for himself and his valiant troops, as the post of danger at the time, cheerfully acquiesced, nevertheless, in the arrangement proposed by the Emperor, as most fit to effect the imperial safety, and that of the army.

"The imperial orders, as they were sent instantly abroad, were in like manner executed with the readiest punctuality, the rather that they indicated a course of safety which had been almost despaired of even by the oldest soldiers. During the dead period of time, when, as the divine Homer tells us, gods and men are alike asleep, it was found that the vigilance and prudence of a single individual had provided safety for the whole Roman army. The pinnacles of the mountain passes were scarcely touched by the earliest beams of the dawn, when these beams were also reflected from the steel caps and spears of the Syrians, under the command of a captain named Monastras, who, with his tribe, had attached himself to the empire. The Emperor, at the head of his faithful Varangians, defiled through the passes, in order to gain that degree of advance on the road to the city of Laodicea which was desired, so as to avoid coming into collision with the barbarians.

"It was a goodly sight to see the dark mass of Northern warriors, who now led the van of the army, moving slowly and steadily through the defiles of the mountains, around the insulated rocks and precipices, and surmounting the gentler acclivities, like the course of a strong and mighty river; while the loose bands of archers and javelin-men, armed after the Eastern manner, were dispersed on the steep sides of the defiles, and might be compared to light foam upon the edge of the torrent. In the midst of the squadrons of the life-guard might be seen the proud war-horse of his Imperial Majesty, which pawed the earth indignantly, as if impatient at the delay which separated him from his august burden. The Emperor Alexius himself traveled in a litter, borne by eight strong African slaves, that he might rise perfectly refreshed if the army should be overtaken by the

* See Note 4.

enemy. The valiant Achilles Tatius rode near the couch of his master, that none of those luminous ideas by which our august sire so often decided the fate of battle might be lost for want of instant communication to those whose duty it was to execute them. I may also say that there were close to the litter of the Emperor three or four carriages of the same kind; one prepared for the Moon, as she may be termed, of the universe, the gracious Empress Irene. Among the others which might be mentioned was that which contained the authoress of this history, unworthy as she may be of distinction, save as the daughter of the eminent and sacred persons whom the narration chiefly concerns. In this manner the imperial army pressed on through the dangerous defiles, where their march was exposed to insults from the barbarians. They were happily cleared without any opposition. When we came to the descent of the pass which looks down on the city of Laodicea, the sagacity of the Emperor commanded the van—which, though the soldiers composing the same were heavily armed, had hitherto marched extremely fast—to halt, as well that they themselves might take some repose and refreshment as to give the rearward forces time to come up, and close various gaps which the rapid movement of those in front had occasioned in the line of march.

"The place chosen for this purpose was eminently beautiful, from the small and comparatively insignificant ridge of hills which melt irregularly down into the plains stretching between the pass which we occupied and Laodicea. The town was about one hundred stadia distant, and some of our more sanguine warriors pretended that they could already discern its towers and pinnacles glittering in the early beams of the sun, which had not as yet risen high into the horizon. A mountain torrent, which found its source at the foot of a huge rock that yawned to give it birth, as if struck by the rod of the prophet Moses, poured its liquid treasure down to the more level country, nourishing herbage, and even large trees, in its descent, until, at the distance of some four or five miles, the stream, at least in dry seasons, was lost amid heaps of sand and stones, which in the rainy season marked the strength and fury of its current.

"It was pleasant to see the attention of the Emperor to the comforts of the companions and guardians of his march. The trumpets from time to time gave license to various parties of the Varangians to lay down their arms, to eat the food which was distributed to them, and quench their thirst

at the pure stream which poured its bounties down the hill, or they might be seen to extend their bulky forms upon the turf around them. The Emperor, his most serene spouse, and the princesses and ladies were also served with breakfast, at the fountain formed by the small brook in its very birth, and which the reverent feelings of the soldiers had left unpolluted by vulgar touch, for the use of that family emphatically said to be born in the purple. Our beloved husband was also present on this occasion, and was among the first to detect one of the disasters of the day. For, although all the rest of the repast had been, by the dexterity of the officers of the imperial mouth, so arranged, even on so awful an occasion, as to exhibit little difference from the ordinary provisions of the household, yet, when his Imperial Highness called for wine, behold, not only was the sacred liquor dedicated to his own peculiar imperial use wholly exhausted or left behind, but, to use the language of Horace, not the vilest Sabine vintage could be procured; so that his Imperial Highness was glad to accept the offer of a rude Varangian, who proffered his modicum of decocted barley, which these barbarians prefer to the juice of the grape. The Emperor, nevertheless, accepted of this coarse tribute."

"Insert," said the Emperor, who had been hitherto either plunged in deep contemplation or in an incipient slumber—"insert, I say, these very words: 'And with the heat of the morning, and anxiety of so rapid a march, with a numerous enemy in his rear, the Emperor was so thirsty as never in his life to think beverage more delicious.'"

In obedience to her imperial father's orders, the Princess resigned the manuscript to the beautiful slave by whom it was written, repeating to the fair scribe the commanded addition, requiring her to note it as made by the express sacred command of the Emperor, and then proceeded thus: "More I had said here respecting the favorite liquor of your Imperial Highness's faithful Varangians; but your Highness having once graced it with a word of commendation, this *ail*, as they call it, doubtless because removing all disorders, which they term 'ailments,' becomes a theme too lofty for the discussion of any inferior person. Suffice it to say, that thus were we all pleasantly engaged, the ladies and slaves trying to find some amusement for the imperial ears; the soldiers, in a long line down the ravine, seen in different postures, some straggling to the watercourse, some keeping guard over the arms of their comrades, in which duty they relieved each other, while body after body of the remaining troops, under

command of the Protospathaire, and particularly those called Immortals, joined the main army as they came up. Those soldiers who were already exhausted were allowed to take a short repose, after which they were sent forward, with directions to advance steadily on the road to Laodicea; while their leader was instructed, so soon as he should open a free communication with that city, to send thither a command for reinforcements and refreshments, not forgetting fitting provision of the sacred wine for the imperial mouth. Accordingly, the Roman bands of Immortals and others had resumed their march, and held some way on their journey, it being the imperial pleasure that the Varangians, lately the vanguard, should now form the rear of the whole army, so as to bring off in safety the Syrian light troops, by whom the hilly pass was still occupied, when we heard upon the other side of this defile, which we had traversed with so much safety, the awful sound of the *lelies*, as the Arabs name their shout of onset, though in what language it is expressed it would be hard to say. Perchance some in this audience may enlighten my ignorance?"

"May I speak and live?" said the Acoulouthos Achilles, proud of his literary knowledge, the words are, *Alla illa Alla; Mohammed resoul Alla.** These, or something like them, contain the Arabs' profession of faith, which they always call out when they join battle; I have heard them many times."

"And so have I," said the Emperor; "and as thou didst, I warrant me, I have sometimes wished myself anywhere else than within hearing."

All the circle were alive to hear the answer of Achilles Tatius. He was too good a courtier, however, to make any imprudent reply. "It was my duty," he replied, "to desire to be as near your Imperial Highness as your faithful Follower ought, wherever you might wish yourself for the time."

Agelastes and Zosimus exchanged looks; and the Princess Anna Comneno proceeded in her recitation.

"The cause of these ominous sounds, which came in wild confusion up the rocky pass, was soon explained to us by a dozen cavaliers, to whom the task of bringing intelligence had been assigned."

"These informed us that the barbarians, whose host had been dispersed around the position in which we had encamped the preceding day, had not been enabled to get their forces together until our light troops were evacuating the

* *i.e.* "God is God—Mahomet is the prophet of God."

post they had occupied for securing the retreat of our army. They were then drawing off from the tops of the hills into the pass itself, when, in despite of the rocky ground, they were charged furiously by Jezdegerd, at the head of a large body of his followers, which, after repeated exertions, he had at length brought to operate on the rear of the Syrians. Notwithstanding that the pass was unfavorable for cavalry, the personal exertions of the infidel chief made his followers advance with a degree of resolution unknown to the Syrians of the Roman army, who, finding themselves at a distance from their companions, formed the injurious idea that they were left there to be sacrificed, and thought of flight in various directions rather than of a combined and resolute resistance. The state of affairs, therefore, at the further end of the pass, was less favorable than we could wish, and those whose curiosity desired to see something which might be termed the rout of the rear of an army beheld the Syrians pursued from the hill-tops, overwhelmed, and individually cut down and made prisoners by the bands of caitiff Mussulmans.

"His Imperial Highness looked upon the scene of battle for a few minutes, and, much commoved at what he saw, was somewhat hasty in his directions to the Varangians to resume their arms, and precipitate their march towards Laodicea; whereupon one of those Northern soldiers said boldly, though in opposition to the Imperial command, 'If we attempt to go hastily down this hill, our rear-guard will be confused, not only by our own hurry, but by these runaway scoundrels of Syrians, who in their headlong flight will not fail to mix themselves among our ranks. Let two hundred Varangians, who will live and die for the honor of England, abide in the very throat of this pass with me, while the rest escort the Emperor to this Laodicea, or whatever it is called. We may perish in our defense, but we shall die in our duty; and I have little doubt but we shall furnish such a meal as will stay the stomach of these yelping hounds from seeking any farther banquet this day.'

"My imperial father at once discovered the importance of this advice, though it made him wellnigh weep to see with what unshrinking fidelity these poor barbarians pressed to fill up the number of those who were to undertake this desperate duty, with what kindness they took leave of their comrades, and with what jovial shouts they followed their sovereign with their eyes as he proceeded on his march down the hill, leaving them behind to resist and perish. The

imperial eyes were filled with tears ; and I am not ashamed to confess that, amid the terror of the moment, the Empress, and I myself, forgot our rank in paying a similar tribute to these bold and self-devoted men.

"We left their leader carefully arraying his handful of comrades in defence of the pass, where the middle path was occupied by their center, while their wings on either side were so disposed as to act upon the flanks of the enemy, should he rashly press upon such as appeared opposed to him in the road. We had not proceeded half-way towards the plain when a dreadful shout arose, in which the yells of the Arabs were mingled with the deep and more regular shout which these strangers usually repeat thrice, as well when bidding hail to their commanders and princes as when in the act of engaging in battle. Many a look was turned back by their comrades, and many a form was seen in the ranks which might have claimed the chisel of a sculptor, while the soldier hesitated whether to follow the line of his duty, which called him to march forward with his Emperor, or the im pulse of courage, which prompted him to rush back to join his companions. Discipline, however, prevailed, and the main body marched on.

"An hour had elapsed, during which we heard, from time to time, the noise of battle, when a mounted Varangian presented himself at the side of the Emperor's litter. The horse was covered with foam, and had obviously, from his trappings, the fineness of his limbs, and the smallness of his joints, been the charger of some chief of the desert, which had fallen by the chance of battle into the possession of the Northern warrior. The broad ax which the Varangian bore was also stained with blood, and the paleness of death itself was upon his countenance. These marks of recent battle were held sufficient to excuse the irregularity of his salutation, while he exclaimed—'Noble prince, the Arabs are defeated, and you may pursue your march at more leisure.'

"'Where is Jezdegerd ?' said the Emperor, who had many reasons for dreading this celebrated chief.

"'Jezdegerd,' continued the Varangian, 'is where brave men are who fall in their duty.'

"'And that is——' said the Emperor, impatient to know distinctly the fate of so formidable an adversary.

"'Where I am now going,' answered the faithful soldier, who dropped from his horse as he spoke, and expired at the feet of the litter-bearers.

"The Emperor called to his attendants to see that the

body of this faithful retainer, to whom he destined an honorable sepulcher, was not left to the jackall or vulture; and some of his brethren, the Anglo-Saxons, among whom he was a man of no mean repute, raised the body on their shoulders, and resumed their march with this additional incumbrance, prepared to fight for their precious burden, like the valiant Menelaus for the body of Patroclus."

The Princess Anna Comnena here naturally paused; for, having attained what she probably considered as the rounding of a period, she was willing to gather an idea of the feelings of her audience. Indeed, but that she had been intent upon her own manuscript, the emotions of the foreign soldier must have more early attracted her attention. In the beginning of her recitation, he had retained the same attitude which he had at first assumed, stiff and rigid as a sentinel upon duty, and apparently remembering nothing, save that he was performing that duty in presence of the imperial court. As the narrative advanced, however, he appeared to take more interest in what was read. The anxious fears expressed by the various leaders in the midnight council he listened to with a smile of suppressed contempt, and he almost laughed at the praises bestowed upon the leader of his own corps, Achilles Tatius. Nor did even the name of the Emperor, though listened to respectfully, gain that applause for which his daughter fought so hard, and used so much exaggeration.

Hitherto the Varangian's countenance indicated very slightly any internal emotions; but they appeared to take a deeper hold on his mind as she came to the description of the halt after the main army had cleared the pass, the unexpected advance of the Arabs, the retreat of the column which escorted the Emperor, and the account of the distant engagement. He lost, on hearing the narration of these events, the rigid and constrained look of a soldier, who listened to the history of his Emperor with the same feelings with which he would have mounted guard at his palace. His color began to come and go, his eyes to fill and to sparkle, his limbs to become more agitated than their owner seemed to assent to, and his whole appearance was changed into that of a listener highly interested by the recitation which he hears, and insensible, or forgetful, of whatever else is passing before him, as well as of the quality of those who are present.

As the historian proceeded, Hereward became less able to conceal his agitation; and at the moment the Princess looked

round, his feelings became so acute that, forgetting where he was, he dropped his ponderous ax upon the floor, and, clasping his hands together, exclaimed, "My unfortunate brother!"

All were startled by the clang of the falling weapon, and several persons at once attempted to interfere, as called upon to explain a circumstance so unusual. Achilles Tatius made some small progress in a speech designed to apologize for the rough mode of venting his sorrows to which Hereward had given away, by assuring the eminent persons present that the poor uncultivated barbarian was actually younger brother to him who had commanded and fallen at the memorable defile. The Princess said nothing, but was evidently struck and affected, and not ill-pleased, perhaps, at having given rise to feelings of interest so flattering to her as an authoress. The others, each in their character, uttered incoherent words of what was meant to be consolation; for distress which flows from a natural cause generally attracts sympathy even from the most artificial characters. The voice of Alexius silenced all these imperfect speakers. "Hah, my brave soldier, Edward!" said the Emperor, "I must have been blind that I did not sooner recognize thee, as I think there is a memorandum entered respecting five hundred pieces of gold due from us to Edward the Varangian; we have it in our secret scroll of such liberalities for which we stand indebted to our servitors, nor shall the payment be longer deferred."

"Not to me, if it may please you, my liege," said the Anglo-Dame, hastily composing his countenance into its rough gravity of lineament, "lest it should be to one who can claim no interest in your imperial munificence. My name is Hereward; that of Edward is borne by three of my companions, all of them as likely as I to have deserved your Highness's reward for the faithful performance of their duty."

Many a sign was made by Tatius in order to guard his soldier against the folly of declining the liberality of the Emperor.

Agelastes spoke more plainly. "Young man," he said, "rejoice in an honor so unexpected, and answer henceforth to no other name save that of Edward, by which it hath pleased the light of the world, as it poured a ray upon thee, to distinguish thee from other barbarians. What is to thee the font-stone, or the priest officiating thereat, shouldst thou have derived from either any epithet different

from that by which it hath now pleased the Emperor to distinguish thee from the common mass of humanity, and by which proud distinction thou hast now a right to be known ever afterwards?"

"Hereward [Waltheoff] was the name of my father," said the soldier, who had now altogether recovered his composure. "I cannot abandon it while I honor his memory in death. Edward is the title of my comrade; I must not run the risk of usurping his interest."

"Peace all!" interrupted the Emperor. "If we have made a mistake, we are rich enough to right it; nor shall Hereward be the poorer, if an Edward shall be found to merit this gratuity."

"Your Highness may trust that to your affectionate consort," answered the Empress Irene.

"His Most Sacred Highness," said the Princess Anna Comnena, "is so avariciously desirous to do whatever is good and gracious, that he leaves no room even for his nearest connections to display generosity or munificence. Nevertheless, I, in my degree, will testify my gratitude to this brave man; for where his exploits are mentioned in this history I will cause to be recorded, 'This feat was done by Hereward the Anglo-Dane, whom it hath pleased his Imperial Majesty to call Edward.' Keep this, good youth," she continued, bestowing at the same time a ring of price, "in token that we will not forget our engagement."

Hereward accepted the token with a profound obeisance, and a discomposure which his station rendered not unbecoming. It was obvious to most persons present that the gratitude of the beautiful princess was expressed in a manner more acceptable to the youthful life-guardsman than that of Alexius Comnenus. He took the ring with great demonstration of thankfulness. "Precious relic!" he said, as he saluted this pledge of esteem by pressing it to his lips; "we may not remain long together, but be assured," bending reverently to the Princess, "that death alone shall part us."

"Proceed, our princely daughter," said the Empress Irene; "you have done enough to show that valor is precious to her who can confer fame, whether it be found in a Roman or a barbarian."

The Princess resumed her narrative with some slight appearance of embarrassment.

"Our movement upon Laodicea was now resumed, and continued with good hopes on the part of those engaged in the march. Yet instinctively we could not help casting our

eyes to the rear, which had been so long the direction in which we feared attack. At length, to our surprise, a thick cloud of dust was visible on the descent of the hill, half-way betwixt us and the place at which we had halted. Some of the troops who composed our retreating body, particularly those in the rear, began to exclaim, "The Arabs—the Arabs!" and their march assumed a more precipitate character when they believed themselves pursued by the enemy. But the Varangian guards affirmed with one voice that the dust was raised by the remains of their own comrades, who, left in the defense of the pass, had marched off after having so valiantly maintained the station intrusted to them. They fortified their opinion by professional remarks that the cloud of dust was more concentrated than if raised by the Arab horse, and they even pretended to assert, from their knowledge of such cases, that the number of their comrades had been much diminished in the action. Some Syrian horsemen, despatched to reconnoiter the approaching body, brought intelligence corresponding with the opinion of the Varangians in every particular. The portion of the body guard had beaten back the Arabs, and their gallant leader had slain their chief Jezdegerd, in which service he was mortally wounded, as this history hath already mentioned. The survivors of the detachment, diminished by one half, were now on their march to join the Emperor, as fast as the incumbrance of bearing their wounded to a place of safety would permit.

"The Emperor Alexius, with one of those brilliant and benevolent ideas which mark his paternal character towards his soldiers, ordered all the litters, even that for his own most sacred use, to be instantly sent back to relieve the bold Varangians of the task of bearing the wounded. The shouts of the Varangians' gratitude may be more easily conceived than described, when they beheld the Emperor himself descend from his litter, like an ordinary cavalier, and assume his war-horse, at the same time that the Most Sacred Empress, as well as the authoress of this history, with other princesses born in the purple, mounted upon mules, in order to proceed upon the march, while their litters were unhesitatingly assigned for the accommodation of the wounded men. This was indeed a mark as well of military sagacity as of humanity; for the relief afforded to the bearers of the wounded enabled the survivors of those who had defended the defile at the fountain to join us sooner than would otherwise have been possible.

"It was an awful thing to see those men who had left us in the full splendor which military equipment gives to youth and strength again appearing in diminished numbers—their armor shattered, their shields full of arrows, their offensive weapons marked with blood, and they themselves exhibiting all the signs of desperate and recent battle. Nor was it less interesting to remark the meeting of the soldiers who had been engaged with the comrades whom they had rejoined. The Emperor, at the suggestion of the trusty Acoulouthos, permitted them a few moments to leave their ranks, and learn from each other the fate of the battle.

"As the two bands mingled, it seemed a meeting where grief and joy had a contest together. The most rugged of these barbarians—and I who saw it can bear witness to the fact—as he welcomed with a grasp of his strong hand some comrade whom he had given up for lost, had his large blue eyes filled with tears at hearing of the loss of some one whom he had hoped might have survived. Other veterans reviewed the standards which had been in the conflict, satisfied themselves that they had all been brought back in honor and safety, and counted the fresh arrow-shots with which they had been pierced, in addition to similar marks of former battles. All were loud in the praises of the brave young leader they had lost, nor were the acclamations less general in laud of him who had succeeded to the command, who brought up the party of his deceased brother, and whom," said the Princess, in a few words which seemed apparently interpolated for the occasion, "I now assure of the high honor and estimation in which he is held by the author of this history—that is, I would say, by every member of the imperial family—for his gallant services in such an important crisis."

Having hurried over her tribute to her friend the Varangian, in which emotions mingled that are not willingly expressed before so many hearers, Anna Comnena proceeded with composure in the part of her history which was less personal.

"We had not much time to make more observations on what passed among those brave soldiers; for, a few minutes having been allowed to their feelings, the trumpet sounded the advance towards Laodicea, and we soon beheld the town, now about four miles from us, in fields which were chiefly covered with trees. Apparently the garrison had already some notice of our approach, for carts and wains were seen advancing from the gates with refreshments, which the heat

of the day, the length of the march, and columns of dust, as well as the want of water, had rendered of the last necessity to us. The soldiers joyfully mended their pace in order to meet the sooner with the supplies of which they stood so much in need. But as the cup doth not carry in all cases the liquid treasure to the lips for which it was intended, however much it may be longed for, what was our mortification to behold a cloud of Arabs issue at full gallop from the wooded plain betwixt the Roman army and the city, and throw themselves upon the wagons, slaying the drivers, and making havoc and spoil of the contents! This, we afterwards learned, was a body of the enemy, headed by Varanes, equal in military fame among those infidels to Jezdegerd, his slain brother. When this chieftain saw that it was probable that the Varangians would succeed in their desperate defense of the pass, he put himself at the head of a large body of cavalry; and, as these infidels are mounted on horses unmatched either in speed or wind, performed a long circuit, traversed the stony ridge of hills at a more northerly defile, and placed himself in ambuscade in the wooded plain I have mentioned, with the hope of making an unexpected assault upon the Emperor and his army, at the very time when they might be supposed to reckon upon an undisputed retreat. This surprise would certainly have taken place, and it is not easy to say what might have been the consequence, had not the unexpected appearance of the train of wagons awakened the unbridled rapacity of the Arabs, in spite of their commander's prudence and attempts to restrain them. In this manner the proposed ambuscade was discovered.

"But Varanes, willing still to gain some advantage from the rapidity of his movements, assembled as many of his horsemen as could be collected from the spoil, and pushed forward towards the Romans, who had stopped short on their march at so unlooked-for an apparition. There was an uncertainty and wavering in our first ranks which made their hesitation known even to so poor a judge of military demeanor as myself. On the contrary, the Varangians joined in a unanimous cry of "Bills"*—that is, in their language, battle-axes—"to the front!" and the Emperor's most gracious will acceding to their valorous desire, they pressed forward from the rear to the head of the column. I can hardly say how this maneuver was executed, but it was

* Villehardouin says, "Les Anglois et Danois mult bien combattoient avec leur *haches*."

doubtless by the wise directions of my most serene father, distinguished for his presence of mind upon such difficult occasions. It was, no doubt, much facilitated by the good-will of the troops themselves; the Roman bands, called the Immortals, showing, as it seemed to me, no less desire to fall into the rear than did the Varangians to occupy the places which the Immortals left vacant in front. The maneuver was so happily executed that, before Varanes and his Arabs had arrived at the van of our troops, they found it occupied by the inflexible guard of Northern soldiers. I might have seen with my own eyes, and called upon them as sure evidences of that which chanced upon the occasion. But, to confess the truth, my eyes were little used to look upon such sights; for of Varane's charge I only beheld, as it were, a thick cloud of dust rapidly driven forward, through which were seen the glittering points of lances, and the waving plumes of turbaned cavaliers imperfectly visible. The tecbir was so loudly uttered, that I was scarcely aware that kettledrums and brazen cymbals were sounding in concert with it. But this wild and outrageous storm was met as effectually as if encountered by a rock.

"The Varangians, unshaken by the furious charge of the Arabs, received horse and rider with a shower of blows from their massive battle-axes, which the bravest of the enemy could not face, nor the strongest endure. The guards strengthened their ranks also, by the hindmost pressing so close upon those that went before, after the manner of the ancient Macedonians, that the fine-limbed, though slight, steeds of these Idumeans could not make the least inroad upon the Northern phalanx. The bravest men, the most gallant horses, fell in the first rank. The weighty, though short, horse javelins, flung from the rear ranks of the brave Varangians with good aim and sturdy arm, completed the confusion of the assailants, who turned their back in affright and fled from the field in total confusion.

"The enemy thus repulsed, we proceeded on our march, and only halted when we recovered our half-plundered wagons. Here, also, some invidious remarks were made by certain officers of the interior of the household, who had been on duty over the stores, and, having fled from their posts on the assault of the infidels, had only returned upon their being repulsed. These men, quick in malice, though slow in perilous service, reported that, on this occasion, the Varangians so far forgot their duty as to consume a part of the sacred wine reserved for the imperial lips alone. It would

be criminal to deny that this was a great and culpable oversight; nevertheless, our imperial hero passed it over as a pardonable offense, remarking, in a jesting manner, that since he had drank the *ail*, as they termed it, of his trusty guard, the Varangians had acquired a right to quench the thirst and to relieve the fatigue which they had undergone that day in his defense, though they used for these purposes the sacred contents of the imperial cellar.

"In the meantime, the cavalry of the army were despatched in pursuit of the fugitive Arabs; and having succeeded in driving them behind the chain of hills which had so recently divided them from the Romans, the imperial arms might justly be considered as having obtained a complete and glorious victory.

"We are now to mention the rejoicings of the citizens of Laodicea, who, having witnessed from their ramparts, with alternate fear and hope, the fluctuations of the battle, now descended to congratulate the imperial conqueror."

Here the fair narrator was interrupted. The principal entrance of the apartment flew open, noiselessly indeed, but with both folding leaves at once, not as if to accommodate the entrance of an ordinary courtier, studying to create as little disturbance as possible, but as if there was entering a person who ranked so high as to make it indifferent how much attention was drawn to his motions. It could only be one born in the purple, or nearly allied to it, to whom such freedom was lawful; and most of the guests, knowing who were likely to appear in that temple of the Muses, anticipated, from the degree of bustle, the arrival of Nicephorus Briennius, the son-in-law of Alexius Comnenus, the husband to the fair historian, and in the rank of Cæsar, which, however, did not at that period imply, as in early ages, the dignity of second person in the empire. The policy of Alexius had interposed more than one person of condition between the Cæsar and his original rights and rank, which had once been second to those only of the Emperor himself.

CHAPTER V

The storm increases: 'tis no sunny shower,
Foster'd in the moist breast of March or April,
Or such as parched summer cools his lip with.
Heaven's windows are flung wide; the inmost deeps
Call in hoarse greeting one upon another;
On comes the flood in all its foaming horrors,
And where's the dike shall stop it?*

The Deluge, a Poem.

THE distinguished individual who entered was a noble Grecian, of stately presence, whose habit was adorned with every mark of dignity, saving those which Alexius had declared sacred to the Emperor's own person and that of the Sebastocrator, whom he had established as next in rank to the head of the empire. Nicephorus Briennius, who was in the bloom of youth, retained all the marks of that manly beauty which had made the match acceptable to Anna Comnena; while political considerations, and the desire of attaching a powerful house as friendly adherents of the throne, recommended the union to the Emperor.

We have already hinted that the royal bride had, though in no great degree, the very doubtful advantage of years. Of her literary talents we have seen tokens. Yet it was not believed by those who best knew that, with the aid of those claims to respect, Anna Comnena was successful in possessing the unlimited attachment of her handsome husband. To treat her with apparent neglect, her connection with the crown rendered impossible; while, on the other hand, the power of Nicephorus's family was too great to permit his being dictated to even by the Emperor himself. He was possessed of talents, as it was believed, calculated both for war and peace. His advice was, therefore, listened to, and his assistance required, so that he claimed complete liberty with respect to his own time, which he sometimes used with less regular attendance upon the temple of the Muses than the goddess of the place thought herself entitled to, or than the

* These lines were penned impromptu one wet afternoon in February, 1831, while taking refuge in the late Mr. Cadell's house, Edinburgh (*Laing*).

Empress Irene was disposed to exact on the part of her daughter. The good-humored Alexius observed a sort of neutrality in this matter, and kept it as much as possible from becoming visible to the public, conscious that it required the whole united strength of his family to maintain his place in so agitated an empire.

He pressed his son-in-law's hand, as Nicephorus, passing his father-in-law's seat, bent his knee in token of homage. The constrained manner of the Empress indicated a more cold reception of son-in-law, while the fair muse herself scarcely deigned to signify her attention to his arrival, when her handsome mate assumed the vacant seat by her side, which we have already made mention of.

There was an awkward pause, during which the imperial son-in-law, coldly received when he expected to be welcomed, attempted to enter into some light conversation with the fair slave Astarte, who knelt behind her mistress. This was interrupted by the Princess commanding her attendant to inclose the manuscript within its appropriate casket, and convey it with her own hands to the cabinet of Apollo, the usual scene of the Princess's studies, as the temple of the Muses was that commonly dedicated to her recitations.

The Emperor himself was the first to break an unpleasant silence. "Fair son-in-law," he said, "though it now wears something late in the night, you will do yourself wrong if you permit our Anna to send away that volume, with which this company have been so delectably entertained that they may well say that the desert hath produced roses, and the barren rocks have poured forth milk and honey, so agreeable is the narrative of a toilsome and dangerous campaign in the language of our daughter."

"The Cæsar," said the Empress, "seems to have little taste for such dainties as this family can produce. He hath of late repeatedly absented himself from this temple of the Muses, and found doubtless more agreeable conversation and amusement elsewhere."

"I trust, madam," said Nicephorus, "that my taste may vindicate me from the charge implied. But it is natural that our sacred father should be most delighted with the milk and honey which is produced for his own special use."

The Princess spoke in the tone of a handsome woman offended by her lover, and feeling the offense, yet not indisposed to a reconciliation.

"If," she said, "the deeds of Nicephorus Briennius are less frequently celebrated in that poor roll of parchment

than those of my illustrious father, he must do me the justice to remember that such was his own special request; either proceeding from that modesty which is justly ascribed to him as serving to soften and adorn his other attributes, or because he with justice distrusts his wife's power to compose their eulogium."

"We will then summon back Astarte," said the Empress, "who cannot yet have carried her offering to the cabinet of Apollo."

"With your imperial pleasure," said Nicephorus, "it might incense the Pythian god were a deposit to be recalled of which he alone can fitly estimate the value. I came hither to speak with the Emperor upon pressing affairs of state, and not to hold a literary conversation with a company which I must needs say is something of a miscellaneous description, since I behold an ordinary life-guardsman in the imperial circle."

"By the rood, son-in-law," said Alexius, "you do this gallant man wrong. He is the brother of that brave Anglo-Dane who secured the victory at Laodicea by his valiant conduct and death; he himself is that Edmund—or Edward—or Hereward—to whom we are ever bound for securing the success of that victorious day. He was called into our presence, son-in-law, since it imports that you should know so much, to refresh the memory of my Follower, Achilles Tatius, as well as mine own, concerning some transactions of the day of which we had become in some degree oblivious."

"Truly, imperial sir," answered Briennius, "I grieve that, by having intruded on such important researches, I may have, in some degree, intercepted a portion of that light which is to illuminate future ages. Methinks that in a battlefield, fought under your imperial guidance and that of your great captains, your evidence might well supersede the testimony of such a man as this. Let me know," he added, turning haughtily to the Varangian, "what particular thou canst add, that is unnoticed in the Princess's narrative?"

The Varangian replied instantly, "Only that, when we made a halt at the fountain, the music that was there made by the ladies of the Emperor's household, and particularly by those two whom I now behold, was the most exquisite that ever reached my ears."

"Hah! darest thou to speak so audacious an opinion?" exclaimed Nicephorus. "Is it for such as thou to suppose

for a moment that the music which the wife and daughter of the Emperor might condescend to make was intended to afford either matter of pleasure or of criticism to every plebeian barbarian who might hear them ? Begone from this place ! nor dare, on any pretext, again to appear before mine eyes—under allowance always of our imperial father's pleasure."

The Varangian bent his looks upon Achilles Tatius, as the person from whom he was to take his orders to stay or withdraw. But the Emperor himself took up the subject with considerable dignity.

"Son," he said, "we cannot permit this. On account of some love quarrel, as it would seem, betwixt you and our daughter, you allow yourself strangely to forget our imperial rank, and to order from our presence those whom we have pleased to call to attend us. This is neither right nor seemly, nor is it our pleasure that this same Hereward—or Edward—or whatever be his name—either leave us at this present moment, or do at any time hereafter regulate himself by any commands save our own, or those of our Follower, Achilles Tatius. And now, allowing this foolish affair, which I think was blown among us by the wind, to pass as it came, without further notice, we crave to know the grave matters of state which brought you to our presence at so late an hour. You look again at this Varangian. Withhold not your words, I pray you, on account of his presence ; for he stands as high in our trust, and we are convinced with as good reason, as any counsellor who has been sworn our domestic servant."

"To hear is to obey," returned the Emperor's son-in-law, who saw that Alexius was somewhat moved, and knew that in such cases it was neither safe nor expedient to drive him to extremity. "What I have to say," continued he, "must so soon be public news, that it little matters who hears it ; and yet the West, so full of strange changes, never sent to the Eastern half of the globe tidings so alarming as those I now come to tell your Imperial Highness. Europe, to borrow an expression from this lady, who honors me by calling me husband, seems loosened from its foundations and about to precipitate itself upon Asia——"

"So I did express myself," said the Princess Anna Comnena, "and, as I trust, not altogether unforcibly, when we first heard that the wild impulse of those restless barbarians of Europe had driven a tempest as of a thousand nations upon our western frontier, with the extravagant purpose, as they pretended, of possessing themselves of Syria, and the

holy places there marked as the sepulchres of prophets, the martyrdom of saints, and the great events detailed in the blessed Gospel. But that storm, by all accounts, hath burst and passed away, and we well hoped that the danger had gone with it. Devoutly shall we sorrow to find it otherwise."

"And otherwise we must expect to find it," said her husband. "It is very true, as reported to us, that a huge body of men of low rank, and little understanding, assumed arms at the instigation of a mad hermit, and took the road from Germany to Hungary, expecting miracles to be wrought in their favor, as when Israel was guided through the wilderness by a pillar of flame and a cloud. But no showers of manna or of quails relieved their necessities, or proclaimed them the chosen people of God. No waters gushed from the rock for their refreshment. They were enraged at their sufferings, and endeavored to obtain supplies by pillaging the country. The Hungarians, and other nations on our western frontiers, Christians, like themselves, did not hesitate to fall upon this disorderly rabble; and immense piles of bones in wild passes and unfrequented deserts attest the calamitous defeats which extirpated these unholy pilgrims."

"All this," said the Emperor, "we knew before; but what new evil now threatens, since we have already escaped so important a one?"

"Knew before!" said the Prince Nicephorus. "We knew nothing of our real danger before, save that a wild herd of animals, as brutal and as furious as wild bulls, threatened to bend their way to a pasture for which they had formed a fancy, and deluged the Grecian empire and its vicinity in their passage, expecting that Palestine, with its streams of milk and honey, once more awaited them, as God's predestined people. But so wild and disorderly an invasion had no terrors for a civilized nation like the Romans. The brute herd was terrified by our Greek fire; it was snared and shot down by the wild nations who, while they pretend to independence, cover our frontier as with a protecting fortification. The vile multitude has been consumed even by the very quality of the provisions thrown in their way—those wise means of resistance which were at once suggested by the paternal care of the Emperor and by his unfailing policy. Thus wisdom has played its part, and the bark over which the tempest had poured its thunder has escaped, notwithstanding all its violence. But the second storm, by which the former is so closely followed, is of a

new descent of these Western nations, more formidable than any which we or our fathers have yet seen. This consists not of the ignorant or of the fanatical, not of the base, the needy, and the improvident. Now, all that wide Europe possesses of what is wise and worthy, brave and noble, are united by the most religious vows in the same purpose."

"And what is that purpose? Speak plainly," said Alexius. "The destruction of our whole Roman empire, and the blotting out the very name of its chief from among the princes of the earth, among which it has long been predominant, can alone be an adequate motive for a confederacy such as thy speech infers."

"No such design is avowed," said Nicephorus; "and so many princes, wise men, and statesmen of eminence aim, it is pretended, at nothing else than the same extravagant purpose announced by the brute multitude who first appeared in these regions. Here, most gracious Emperor, is a scroll, in which you will find marked down a list of the various armies which, by different routes, are approaching the vicinity of the empire. Behold, Hugh of Vermandois, called from his dignity Hugh the Great, has set sail from the shores of Italy. Twenty knights have already announced their coming, sheathed in armor of steel, inlaid with gold, bearing this proud greeting: 'Let the Emperor of Greece and his lieutenants understand that Hugo Earl of Vermandois is approaching his territories. He is brother to the king of kings—the king of France,* namely—and is attended by the flower of the French nobility. He bears the blessed banner of St. Peter, entrusted to his victorious care by the holy successor of the apostle, and warns thee of all this, that thou mayest provide a reception suitable to his rank.'"

"Here are sounding words," said the Emperor; "but the wind which whistles loudest is not always most dangerous to the vessel. We know something of this nation of France, and have heard more. They are as petulant at least as they are valiant; we will flatter their vanity till we get time and opportunity for more effectual defense. Tush! if words can pay debt, there is no fear of our exchequer becoming insolvent. What follows here, Nicephorus? A list, I suppose, of the followers of this great count!"

"My liege, no," answered Nicephorus Briennius; "so many independent chiefs as your Imperial Highness sees in that memorial, so many independent European armies are

* See Note 5.

advancing by lifferent routes towards the East, and announce the conquest of Palestine from the infidels as their common object."

"A dreadful enumeration," said the Emperor, as he pursued the list; "yet so far happy, that its very length assures us of the impossibility that so many princes can be seriously and consistently united in so wild a project. Thus already my eyes catch the well-known name of an old friend, our enemy—for such are the alternate chances of peace and war—Bohemond of Antioch. Is not he the son of the celebrated Robert of Apulia, so renowned among his countrymen, who raised himself to the rank of grand duke from a simple cavalier, and became sovereign of those of his warlike nation, both in Sicily and Italy? Did not the standards of the German Emperor, of the Roman Pontiff, nay, our own imperial banners, give way before him; until, equally a wily statesman and a brave warrior, he became the terror of Europe, from being a knight whose Norman castle would have been easily garrisoned by six cross-bows and as many lances? It is a dreadful family, a race of craft as well as power. But Bohemond, the son of old Robert, will follow his father's politics. He may talk of Palestine and of the interests of Christendom, but if I can make his interests the same with mine, he is not likely to be guided by any other object. So, then, with the knowledge I already possess of his wishes and projects, it may chance that Heaven sends us an ally in the guise of an enemy. Whom have we next? Godfrey * Duke of Bouillon—leading I see, a most formidable band from the banks of a huge river called the Rhine. What is this person's character?"

"As we hear," replied Nicephorus, "this Godfrey is one of the wisest, noblest and bravest of the leaders who have thus strangely put themselves in motion; and among a list of independent princes, as many in number as those who assembled for the siege of Troy, and followed, most of them, by subjects ten times more numerous, this Godfrey may be regarded as the Agamemmon. The princes and counts esteem him, because he is the foremost in the ranks of those whom they fantastically call knights, and also on account of the good faith and generosity which he practises in all his transactions. The clergy give him credit for the highest zeal for the doctrines of religion, and a corresponding re-

* Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine, the great captain of the first Crusade, afterwards King of Jerusalem. See Gibbon or Mills, *passim*.

spect for the church and its dignitaries. Justice, liberality, and frankness have equally attached to this Godfrey the lower class of the people. His general attention to moral obligations is a pledge to them that his religion is real; and, gifted with so much that is excellent, he is already, although inferior in rank, birth, and power to many chiefs of the crusade, justly regarded as one of its principal leaders."

"Pity," said the Emperor, "that a character such as you describe this prince to be should be under the dominion of a fanaticism scarce worthy of Peter the Hermit, or the clownish multitude which he led, or of the very ass which he rode upon; when I am apt to think the wisest of the first multitude whom we beheld, seeing that it ran away towards Europe as soon as water and barley became scarce."

"Might I be permitted here to speak and yet live," said Agelastes, "I would remark, that the Patriarch himself made a similar retreat so soon as blows became plenty and food scarce."

"Thou hast hit it, Agelastes," said the Emperor; "but the question now is, whether an honorable and important principality could not be formed out of part of the provinces of the Lesser Asia, now laid waste by the Turks. Such a principality, methinks, with its various advantages of soil, climate, industrious inhabitants, and a healthy atmosphere, were well worth the morasses of Bouillon. It might be held as a dependence upon the sacred Roman empire, and garrisoned, as it were, by Godfrey and his victorious Franks would be a bulwark on that point to our just and sacred person. Ha! most holy Patriarch, would not such a prospect shake the most devout crusader's attachment to the burning sands of Palestine?"

"Especially," answered the Patriarch, "if the prince for such a rich 'theme'* was changed into a feudal appanage should be previously converted to the only true faith, as your Imperial Highness undoubtedly means."

"Certainly—most unquestionably," answered the Emperor, with a due affectation of gravity, notwithstanding he was internally conscious how often he had been compelled, by state necessities, to admit, not only Latin Christians, but Manichæans, and other heretics, nay Mohammedan barbarians, into the number of his subjects, and that without experiencing opposition from the scruples of the Patriarch. "Here I find," continued the Emperor, "such a numerous

* The provinces were called "themes."

list of princes and principalities in the act of approaching our boundaries as might well rival the armies of old, who were said to have drunk up rivers, exhausted realms, and trode down forests, in their wasteful advance." As he pronounced these words, a shade of paleness came over the imperial brow, similar to that which had already clothed in sadness most of his counsellors.

"This war of nations," said Nicephorus, "has also circumstances distinguishing it from every other, save that which his Imperial Highness hath waged in former times against those whom we are accustomed to call Franks. We must go forth against a people to whom the strife of combat is as the breath of their nostrils; who, rather than not be engaged in war, will do battle with their nearest neighbors, and challenge each other to mortal fight, as much in sport as we would defy a comrade to a chariot race. They are covered with an impenetrable armor of steel, defending them from blows of the lance and sword, and which the uncommon strength of their horses renders them able to support, though one of ours could as well bear Mount Olympus upon his loins. Their foot ranks carry a missile weapon unknown to us, termed an arblast, or cross-bow. It is not drawn with the right hand, like the bow of other nations, but by placing the feet upon the weapon itself, and pulling with the whole force of the body; and it despatches arrows called bolts, of hard wood pointed with iron, which the strength of the bow can send through the strongest breastplates, and even through stone walls, where not of uncommon thickness."

"Enough," said the Emperor; "we have seen with our own eyes the lances of Frankish knights and the cross-bows of their infantry. If Heaven has allotted them a degree of bravery which to other nations seems wellnigh preternatural, the Divine will has given to the Greek councils that wisdom which it hath refused to barbarians—the art of achieving conquest by wisdom rather than brute force, obtaining by our skill in treaty advantages which victory itself could not have procured. If we have not the use of that dreadful weapon which our son-in-law terms the cross-bow, Heaven, in its favor, has concealed from these Western barbarians the composition and use of the Greek fire—well so called, since by Grecian hands alone it is prepared, and by such only can its lightnings be darted upon the astonished foe." The Emperor paused and looked around him; and although the faces of his counselors still looked blank,

he boldly proceeded: "But to return yet again to this black scroll, containing the names of those nations who approach our frontier, here occur more than one with which, methinks, old memory should make us familiar, though our recollections are distant and confused. It becomes us to know who these men are, that we may avail ourselves of those feuds and quarrels among them which, being blown into life, may happily divert them from the prosecution of this extraordinary attempt in which they are now united. Here is, for example, one Robert, styled Duke of Normandy, who commands a goodly band of counts, with which title we are but too well acquainted; of 'earls,' a word totally strange to us, but apparently some barbaric title of honor; and of knights, whose names are compounded, as we think, chiefly of the French language, but also of another jargon, which we are not ourselves competent to understand. To you, most reverend and most learned Patriarch, we may fittest apply for information on this subject."

"The duties of my station," replied the Patriarch Zosimus, "have withheld my riper years from studying the history of distant realms; but the wise Agelastes, who hath read as many volumes as would fill the shelves of the famous Alexandrian library, can no doubt satisfy your Imperial Majesty's inquiries."

Agelastes erected himself on those enduring legs which had procured him the surname of Elephant, and began a reply to the inquiries of the Emperor rather remarkable for readiness than accuracy. "I have read," said he, "in that brilliant mirror which reflects the time of our fathers, the volumes of the learned Procopius, that the people separately called Normans and Angles are in truth the same race, and that Normandy, sometimes so called, is in fact a part of a district of Gaul. Beyond, and nearly opposite to it, but separated by an arm of the sea, lies a ghostly region, on which clouds and tempests forever rest, and which is well known to its continental neighbors as the abode to which departed spirits are sent after this life. On one side of the strait dwell a few fishermen, men possessed of a strange charter, and enjoying singular privileges, in consideration of their being the living ferrymen who, performing the office of the heathen Charon, carry the spirits of the departed to the island which is their residence after death. At the dead of night these fishermen are, in rotation, summoned to perform the duty by which they seem to hold the permission to reside on this strange coast. A knock is heard

at the door of his cottage who holds the turn of this singular service, sounded by no mortal hand. A whispering, as of a decaying breeze, summons the ferryman to his duty. He hastens to his bark on the sea-shore, and has no sooner launched it than he perceives its hull sink sensibly in the water, so as to express the weight of the dead with whom it is filled. No form is seen, and though voices are heard, yet the accents are undistinguishable, as of one who speaks in his sleep. Thus he traverses the strait between the continent and the island, impressed with the mysterious awe which affects the living when they are conscious of the presence of the dead. They arrive upon the opposite coast, where the cliffs of white chalk form a strange contrast with the eternal darkness of the atmosphere. They stop at a landing-place appointed, but disembark not, for the land is never trodden by earthly feet. Here the passage-boat is gradually lightened of its unearthly inmates, who wander forth in the way appointed to them, while the mariners slowly return to their own side of the strait, having performed for the time this singular service, by which they hold their fishing-huts and their possessions on that strange coast."

Here he ceased ; and the Emperor replied—"If this legend be actually told us by Procopius, most learned Agelastes, it shows that that celebrated historian came more near the heathen than the Christian belief respecting the future state. In truth, this is little more than the old fable of the infernal Styx. Procopius, we believe, lived before the decay of heathenism, and, as we would gladly disbelieve much which he hath told us respecting our ancestor and predecessor Justinian, so we will not pay him much credit in future in point of geographical knowledge. Meanwhile, what ails thee, Achilles Tatius, and why dost thou whisper with that soldier ?"

"My head," answered Achilles Tatius, "is at your imperial command, prompt to pay for the unbecoming trespass of my tongue. I did but ask of this Hereward here what he knew of this matter ; for I have heard my Varangians repeatedly call themselves Anglo-Danes, Normans, Britons, or some other barbaric epithet, and I am sure that one or other, or it may be all, of these barbarous sounds at different times serve to designate the birthplace of these exiles, too happy in being banished from the darkness of barbarism to the luminous vicinity of your imperial presence."

"Speak, then, Varangian, in the name of Heaven," said the Emperor, "and let us know whether we are to look for friends or enemies in those men of Normandy who are now approaching our frontier. Speak with courage, man; and if thou apprehendest danger, remember thou servest a prince well qualified to protect thee."

"Since I am at liberty to speak," answered the life-guardsman, "although my knowledge of the Greek language, which you term the Roman, is but slight, I trust it is enough to demand of his Imperial Highness, in place of all pay, donative, or gift whatsoever, since he has been pleased to talk of designing such for me, that he would place me in the first line of battle which shall be formed against these same Normans and their Duke Robert; and if he pleases to allow me the aid of such Varangians as, for love of me, or hatred of their ancient tyrants, may be disposed to join their arms to mine, I have little doubt so to settle our long accounts with these men, that the Grecian eagles and wolves shall do them the last office, by tearing the flesh from their bones."

"What dreadful feud is this, my soldier," said the Emperor, "that after so many years still drives thee to such extremities when the very name of Normandy is mentioned?"

"Your Imperial Highness shall be judge," said the Varangian. "My fathers, and those of most, though not all, of the corps to whom I belong, are descended from a valiant race who dwelt in the north of Germany, called Anglo-Saxons. Nobody, save a priest possessed of the art of consulting ancient chronicles, can even guess how long it is since they came to the island of Britain, then distracted with civil war. They came, however, on the petition of the natives of the island, for the aid of the Angles was requested by the southern inhabitants. Provinces were granted in recompense of the aid thus liberally afforded, and the greater proportion of the island became, by degrees, the property of the Anglo-Saxons, who occupied it at first as several principalities, and latterly as one kingdom, speaking the language, and observing the laws, of most of those who now form your imperial body-guard of Varangians, or exiles. In process of time, the Northmen became known to the people of the more southern climates. They were so called from their coming from the distant regions of the Baltic Sea—an immense ocean, sometimes frozen with ice as hard as the cliffs of Mount Caucasus. They came

seeking milder regions than nature had assigned them at home; and the climate of France being delightful, and its people slow in battle, they extorted from them the grant of a large province, which was, from the name of the new settlers, called Normandy, though I have heard my father say that was not its proper appellation. They settled there under a duke, who acknowledged the superior authority of the king of France, that is to say, obeying him when it suited his convenience so to do.

"Now it chanced many years since, while these two nations of Normans and Anglo-Saxons were quietly residing upon different sides of the salt-water channel which divides France from England, that William, Duke of Normandy, suddenly levied a large army, came over to Kent, which is on the opposite side of the channel, and there defeated, in a great battle, Harold, who was at that time king of the Anglo-Saxons. It is but grief to tell what followed. Battles have been fought in old times that have had dreadful results, which years, nevertheless, could wash away; but at Hastings —O wo's me!—the banner of my country fell, never again to be raised up. Oppression has driven her wheel over us. All that was valiant amongst us have left the land; and of Englishmen—for such is our proper designation—no one remains in England save as the thrall of the invaders. Many men of Danish descent, who had found their way on different occasions to England, were blended in the common calamity. All was laid desolate by the command of the victors. My father's home lies now an undistinguished ruin, amid an extensive forest, composed out of what were formerly fair fields and domestic pastures, where a manly race derived nourishment by cultivating a friendly soil. The fire has destroyed the church where sleep the fathers of my race; and I, the last of their line, am a wanderer in other climates, a fighter of the battles of others, the servant of a foreign, though a kind, master, in a word, one of the banished—a Varangian."

"Happier in that station," said Achilles Tatius, "than in all the barbaric simplicity which your forefathers prized so highly, since you are now under the cheering influence of that smile which is the life of the world."

"It avails not talking of this," said the Varangian, with a cold gesture.

"These Normans," said the Emperor, "are then the people by whom the celebrated island of Britain is now conquered and governed?"

"It is but too true," answered the Varangian.

"They are, then, a brave and warlike people?" said Alexius.

"It would be base and false to say otherwise of an enemy," said Hereward. "Wrong have they done me, and a wrong never to be atoned; but to speak falsehood of them were but a woman's vengeance. Mortal enemies as they are to me, and mingling with all my recollections as that which is hateful and odious, yet were the troops of Europe mustered, as it seems they are likely to be, no nation or tribe dared in gallantry claim the advance of the haughty Norman."

"And this Duke Robert, who is he?"

"That," answered the Varangian, "I cannot so well explain. He is the son—the eldest son, as men say, of the tyrant William, who subdued England when I hardly existed, or was a child in the cradle. That William, the victor of Hastings, is now dead, we are assured by concurring testimony; but while it seems his eldest son Duke Robert has become his heir to the duchy of Normandy, some other of his children have been so fortunate as to acquire the throne of England—unless, indeed, like the petty farm of some obscure yeoman, the fair kingdom has been divided among the tyrant's issue."

"Concerning this," said the Emperor, "we have heard something, which we shall try to reconcile with the soldier's narrative at leisure, holding the words of this honest Varangian as positive proof, in whatsoever he avers from his own knowledge. And now, my grave and worthy counselors, we must close this evening's service in the temple of the Muses, this distressing news, brought us by our dearest son-in-law, the Cæsar, having induced us to prolong our worship of these learned goddesses deeper into the night than is consistent with the health of our beloved wife and daughter; while, to ourselves, this intelligence brings subject for grave deliberation."

The courtiers exhausted their ingenuity in forming the most ingenious prayers that all evil consequences should be averted which could attend this excessive vigilance.

Nicephorus and his fair bride spoke together as a pair equally desirous to close an accidental breach between them. "Some things thou hast said, my Cæsar," observed the lady, "in detailing this dreadful intelligence, as elegantly turned as if the nine goddesses, to whom this temple is dedicated, had lent each her aid to the sense and expression."

"I need none of their assistance," answered Nicephorus,

"since I possess a muse of my own, in whose genius are included all those attributes which the heathens vainly ascribed to the nine deities of Parnassus."

"It is well," said the fair historian, retiring by the assistance of her husband's arm; "but if you will load your wife with praises far beyond her merits, you must lend her your arm to support her under the weighty burden you have been pleased to impose." The council parted when the imperial persons had retired, and most of them sought to indemnify themselves in more free, though less dignified, circles for the constraint which they had practised in the temple of the Muses.

CHAPTER VI

> **Vain man: thou mayst esteem thy love as fair**
> **As fond hyperboles suffice to raise.**
> **She may be all that's matchless in her person,**
> **And all-divine in soul to match her body;**
> **But take this from me—thou shalt never call her**
> **Superior to her sex, while *one* survives,**
> **And I am her true votary.**
>
> ***Old Play.***

ACHILLES TATIUS, with his faithful Varangian close by his shoulder, melted from the dispersing assembly silently and almost invisibly, as snow is dissolved from its Alpine abodes as the days become more genial. No lordly step or clash of armor betokened the retreat of the military persons. The very idea of the necessity of guards was not ostentatiously brought forward, because, so near the presence of the Emperor, the emanation supposed to flit around that divinity of earthly sovereigns had credit for rendering it impassive and unassailable. Thus the oldest and most skilful courtiers, among whom our friend Agelastes was not to be forgotten, were of opinion that, although the Emperor employed the ministry of the Varangians and other guards, it was rather for form's sake than from any danger of the commission of a crime of a kind so heinous that it was the fashion to account it almost impossible. And this doctrine, of the rare occurrence of such a crime, was repeated from month to month in those very chambers where it had oftener than once been perpetrated, and sometimes by the very persons who monthly laid schemes for carrying some dark conspiracy against the reigning emperor into positive execution.

At length the captain of the life-guardsmen and his faithful attendant found themselves on the outside of the Blacquernal Palace. The passage which Achilles found for their exit was closed by a postern which a single Varangian shut behind them, drawing, at the same time, bolt and bar with an ill-omened and jarring sound. Looking back at the mass of turrets, battlements, and spires out of which they had at length emerged, Hereward could not but feel his heart

lighten to find himself once more under the deep blue of a Grecian heaven, where the planets were burning with unusual luster. He sighed and rubbed his hands with pleasure, like a man newly restored to liberty. He even spoke to his leader, contrary to his custom unless addressed. "Methinks the air of yonder halls, valorous captain, carries with it a perfume which, though it may be well termed sweet, is so suffocating as to be more suitable to sepulchrous chambers than to the dwellings of men. Happy I am that I am free, as I trust, from its influences."

"Be happy, then," said Achilles Tatius, "since thy vile, cloddish spirit feels suffocation rather than refreshment in gales which, instead of causing death, might recall the dead themselves to life. Yet this I will say for thee, Hereward, that, born a barbarian within the narrow circle of a savage's desires and pleasures, and having no idea of life save what thou derivest from such vile and base connections, thou art, nevertheless, designed by nature for better things, and hast this day sustained a trial in which, I fear me, not even one of mine own noble corps, frozen as they are into lumps of unfashioned barbarity, could have equalled thy bearing. And speak now in true faith, hast not thou been rewarded?"

"That will I never deny," said the Varangian. "The pleasure of knowing, twenty-four hours perhaps before my comrades, that the Normans are coming hither to afford us a full revenge of the bloody day of Hastings is a lordly recompense for the task of spending some hours in hearing the lengthened chat of a lady, who has written about she knows not what, and the flattering commentaries of the bystanders, who pretended to give her an account of what they did not themselves stop to witness."

"Hereward, my good youth," said Achilles Tatius, "thou ravest, and I think I should do well to place thee under the custody of some person of skill. Too much hardihood, my valiant soldier, is in soberness allied to overdaring. It was only natural that thou shouldst feel a becoming pride in thy late position; yet, let it but taint thee with vanity, and the effect will be little short of madness. Why, thou hast looked boldly in the face of a princess born in the purple, before whom my own eyes, though well used to such spectacles, are never raised beyond the foldings of her veil."

"So be it, in the name of Heaven!" replied Hereward. "Nevertheless, handsome faces were made to look upon, and the eyes of young men to see withal."

"If such be their final end," said Achilles, "never did

thine, I will freely suppose, find a richer apology for the somewhat overbold license which thou tookest in thy gaze upon the Princess this evening."

"Good leader, or Follower, whichever is your favorite title," said the Anglo-Briton, "drive not to extremity a plain man, who desires to hold his duty in all honor to the imperial family. The Princess, wife of the Cæsar, and born, you tell me, of a purple color, has now inherited, notwithstanding, the features of a most lovely woman. She hath composed a history, of which I presume not to form a judgment, since I cannot understand it; she sings like an angel; and to conclude, after the fashion of the knights of this day—though I deal not ordinarily with their language—I would say cheerfully that I am ready to place myself in lists against any one whomsoever who dares detract from the beauty of the imperial Anna Comnena's person, or from the virtues of her mind. Having said this, my noble captain, we have said all that it is competent for you to inquire into or for me to answer. That there are handsomer women than the Princess is unquestionable; and I question it the less, that I have myself seen a person whom I think far her superior; and with that let us close the dialogue."

"Thy beauty, thou unparalleled fool," said Achilles, "must, I ween, be the daughter of the large-bodied Northern boor, living next door to him upon whose farm was brought up the person of an ass, curst with such intolerable want of judgment."

"You may say your pleasure, captain," replied Hereward; "because it is the safer for us both that thou canst not on such a topic either offend me, who hold thy judgment as light as thou canst esteem mine, or speak any derogation of a person whom you never saw, but whom, if you had seen, perchance I might not so patiently have brooked any reflections upon, even at the hands of a military superior."

Achilles Tatius had a good deal of the penetration necessary for one in his situation. He never provoked to extremity the daring spirits whom he commanded, and never used any freedom with them beyond the extent that he knew their patience could bear. Hereward was a favorite soldier, and had, in that respect at least, a sincere liking and regard for his commander; when, therefore, the Follower, instead of resenting his petulance, good-humoredly apologized for having hurt his feelings, the momentary displeasure between them was at an end: the officer at once reassumed his superiority, and the soldier sunk back with a deep sigh, given to

some period which was long past, into his wonted silence and reserve. Indeed, the Follower had another and further design upon Hereward, of which he was as yet unwilling to do more than give a distant hint.

After a long pause, during which they approached the barracks, a gloomy fortified building constructed for the residence of their corps, the captain motioned his soldier to draw close up to his side, and proceeded to ask him, in a confidential tone—"Hereward, my friend, although it is scarce to be supposed that in the presence of the imperial family thou shouldst mark any one who did not partake of their blood, or rather, as Homer has it, who did not participate of the divine *ichor*, which, in their sacred persons, supplies the place of that vulgar fluid, yet, during so long an audience, thou mightest possibly, from his uncourtly person and attire, have distinguished Agelastes, whom we courtiers call the Elephant, from his strict observation of the rule which forbids any one to sit down or rest in the imperial presence?"

"I think," replied the soldier, "I marked the man you mean: his age was some seventy [sixty] and upwards—a big, burly person; and the baldness which reached to the top of his head was well atoned for by a white beard of prodigious size, which descended in waving curls over his breast, and reached to the towel with which his loins were girded, instead of the silken sash used by other persons of rank."

"Most accurately marked, my Varangian," said the officer. "What else didst thou note about this person?"

"His cloak was in its texture as coarse as that of the meanest of the people, but it was strictly clean, as if it had been the intention of the wearer to exhibit poverty, or carelessness and contempt of dress, avoiding, at the same time, every particular which implied anything negligent, sordid, or disgusting."

"By St. Sophia," said the officer, "thou astonishest me! The prophet Balaam was not more surprised when his ass turned round her head and spoke to him. And what else didst thou note concerning this man? I see those who meet thee must beware of thy observation as well as of thy battle-ax."

"If it please your valor," answered the soldier, "we English have eyes as well as hands; but it is only when discharging our duty that we permit our tongues to dwell on what we have observed. I noted but little of this man's conversation; but from what I heard, it seemed he was not unwill-

ing to play what we call the jester, or jack-pudding, in the conversation—a character which, considering the man's age and physiognomy, is not, I should be tempted to say, natural, but assumed for some purpose of deeper import."

"Hereward," answered his officer, "thou hast spoken like an angel sent down to examine men's bosoms: that man, Agelastes, is a contradiction such as earth has seldom witnessed. Possessing all that wisdom which in former times united the sages of this nation with the gods themselves, Agelastes has the same cunning as the elder Brutus, who disguised his talents under the semblance of an idle jester. He appears to seek no office—he desires no consideration—he pays suit at court only when positively required to do so; yet what shall I say, my soldier, concerning the cause of an influence gained without apparent effort, and extending almost into the very thoughts of men, who appear to act as he would desire, without his soliciting them to that purpose? Men say strange things concerning the extent of his communications with other beings, whom our fathers worshiped with prayer and sacrifice. I am determined, however, to know the road by which he climbs so high and so easily towards the point to which all men aspire at court, and it will go hard but he shall either share his ladder with me or I will strike its support from under him. Thee, Hereward, I have chosen to assist me in this matter, as the knights among these Frankish infidels select, when going upon an adventure, a sturdy squire, or inferior attendant, to share the dangers and the recompense; and this I am moved to, as much by the shrewdness thou hast this night manifested as by the courage which thou mayst boast, in common with, or rather beyond, thy companions."

"I am obliged, and I thank your valor," replied the Varangian, more coldly perhaps than his officer expected; "I am ready, as is my duty, to serve you in anything consistent with God and the Emperor's claims upon my service. I would only say that, as a sworn inferior soldier, I will do nothing contrary to the laws of the empire, and, as a sincere though ignorant Christian, I will have nothing to do with the gods of the heathens, save to defy them in the name and strength of the holy saints."

"Idiot!" said Achilles Tatius, "dost thou think that I, already possessed of one of the first dignities of the empire, could meditate anything contrary to the interests of Alexius Comnenus? or, what would be scarce more atrocious, that I, the chosen friend and ally of the reverend Patriarch Zosimus,

should meddle with anything bearing a relation, however remote, to heresy or idolatry?"

"Truly," answered the Varangian, "no one would be more surprised or grieved than I should; but when we walk in a labyrinth we must assume and announce that we have a steady and forward purpose, which is one mode at least of keeping a straight path. The people of this country have so many ways of saying the same thing that one can hardly know at last what is their real meaning. We English, on the other hand, can only express ourselves in one set of words, but it is one out of which all the ingenuity of the world could not extract a double meaning."

"'Tis well," said his officer; "to-morrow we will talk more of this, for which purpose thou wilt come to my quarters a little after sunset. And hark thee, to-morrow, while the sun is in heaven, shall be thine own, either to sport thyself or to repose. Employ thy time in the latter, by my advice, since to-morrow night, like the present, may find us both watchers."

So saying, they entered the barracks, where they parted company—the commander of the life-guards taking his way to a splendid set of apartments which belonged to him in that capacity, and the Anglo-Saxon seeking his more humble accommodations as a subaltern officer of the same corps.

CHAPTER VI.

Such forces met not, nor so vast a camp,
When Agrican, with all his Northern powers,
Besieged Albracca, as romances tell,
The city of Gallaphron, from thence to win
The fairest of her sex, Angelica,
His daughter, sought by many prowess'd knights,
Both paynim and the peers of Charlemagne.

Paradise Regained.

EARLY on the morning of the day following that which we have commemorated, the imperial council was assembled, where the number of general officers with sounding titles disguised under a thin veil the real weakness of the Grecian empire. The commanders were numerous, and the distinctions of their rank minute, but the soldiers were very few in comparison.

The offices formerly filled by prefects, prætors and questors were now held by persons who had gradually risen into the authority of those officers, and who, though designated from their domestic duties about the Emperor, yet, from that very circumstance, possessed what, in that despotic court, was the most effectual source of power. A long train of officers entered the great hall of the Castle of Blacquernal, and proceeded so far together as their different grades admitted, while in each chamber through which they passed in succession a certain number of the train, whose rank permitted them to advance no farther, remained behind the others. Thus, when the interior cabinet of audience was gained, which was not until their passage through ten anterooms, five persons only found themselves in the presence of the Emperor in this innermost and most sacred recess of royalty, decorated by all the splendor of the period.

The Emperor Alexius sat upon a stately throne, rich with barbaric gems and gold, and flanked on either hand, in imitation probably of Solomon's magnificence, with the form of a couchant lion in the same precious metal. Not to dwell upon other marks of splendor, a tree, whose trunk seemed also of gold, shot up behind the throne, which it over-

canopied with its branches. Amid the boughs were birds of various kinds, curiously wrought and enameled, and fruit composed of precious stones seemed to glisten among the leaves. Five officers alone, the highest in the state, had the privilege of entering this sacred recess when the Emperor held council. These were the Grand Domestic, who might be termed of rank with a modern prime minister; the Logothete, or chancellor; the Protospathaire, or commander of the guards, already mentioned; the Acolyte, or Follower, and leader of the Varangians; and the Patriarch.

The doors of this secret apartment and the adjacent antechamber were guarded by six deformed Nubian slaves, whose writhen and withered countenances formed a hideous contrast with their snow-white dresses and splendid equipment. They were mutes, a species of wretches borrowed from the despotism of the East, that they might be unable to proclaim the deeds of tyranny of which they were the unscrupulous agents. They were generally held in a kind of horror rather than compassion, for men considered that slaves of this sort had a malignant pleasure in avenging upon others the irreparable wrongs which had severed themselves from humanity.

It was a general custom, though, like many other usages of the Greeks, it would be held childish in modern times that, by means of machinery easily conceived, the lions, at the entrance of a stranger, were made, as it were, to rouse themselves and roar, after which a wind seemed to rustle the foliage of the tree, the birds hopped from branch to branch, pecked the fruit, and appeared to fill the chamber with their caroling. This display had alarmed many an ignorant foreign ambassador, and even the Grecian counselors themselves were expected to display the same sensations of fear, succeeded by surprise, when they heard the roar of the lions, followed by the concert of the birds, although perhaps it was for the fiftieth time. On this occasion, as a proof of the urgency of the present meeting of the council, these ceremonies were entirely omitted.

The speech of the Emperor himself seemed to supply by its commencement the bellowing of the lions, while it ended in a strain more resembling the warbling of the birds.

In his first sentences he treated of the audacity and unheard-of boldness of the millions of Franks, who, under the pretense of wresting Palestine from the infidels, had ventured to invade the sacred territories of the empire. He threatened them with such chastisement as his innumerable forces and officers would, he affirmed, find it easy to inflict. To

all this the audience, and especially the military officers, gave symptoms of ready assent.

Alexius, however, did not long persist in the warlike intentions which he at first avowed. The Franks, he at length seemed to reflect, were, in profession, Christians. They might possibly be serious in their pretext of a crusade, in which case their motives claimed a degree of indulgence, and, although erring, a certain portion of respect. Their numbers also were great, and their valor could not be despised by those who had seen them fight at Durazzo* and elsewhere. They might also, by permission of Supreme Providence, be in the long run the instruments of advantage to the most sacred empire, though they approached it with so little ceremony. He had, therefore, mingling the virtues of prudence, humanity and generosity with that valor which must always burn in the heart of an Emperor, formed a plan, which he was about to submit to their consideration, for present execution ; and, in the first place, he requested of the Grand Domestic to let him know what forces he might count upon on the western side of the Bosphorus.

"Innumerable are the forces of the empire as the stars in heaven, or the sand on the seashore," answered the Grand Domestic.

"That is a goodly answer," said the Emperor, "provided there were strangers present at this conference ; but, since we hold consultation in private, it is necessary that I know precisely to what number that army amounts which I have to rely upon. Reserve your eloquence till some fitter time, and let me know what you, at this present moment, mean by the word 'innumerable.'"

The Grand Domestic paused, and hesitated for a short space ; but, as he became aware that the moment was one in which the Emperor could not be trifled with, for Alexius Comnenus was at times dangerous, he answered thus, but not without hesitation—"Imperial master and lord, none better knows that such an answer cannot be hastily made, if it is at the same time to be correct in its results. The number of the imperial host betwixt this city and the western frontier of the empire, deducing those absent upon furlough, cannot be counted upon as amounting to more than twenty-five thousand men, or thirty thousand at most.

Alexius struck his forehead with his hand; and the coun-

* For the battle of Durazzo, Oct. 1081, in which Alexius was defeated with great slaughter by Robert Guiscard, and escaped only by the swiftness of his horse, see Gibbon, ch. lvi.

selors, seeing him give way to such violent expressions of grief and surprise, began to enter into discussions which they would otherwise have reserved for a fitter place and time.

"By the trust your Highness reposes in me," said the Logothete, "there has been drawn from your Highness's coffers during the last year gold enough to pay double the number of the armed warriors whom the Grand Domestic now mentions."

"Your Imperial Highness," retorted the impeached minister, with no small animation, "will at once remember the stationary garrisons, in addition to the movable troops, for which this figure-caster makes no allowance."

"Peace, both of you!" said Alexius, composing himself hastily; "our actual numbers are in truth less than we counted on, but let us not by wrangling augment the difficulties of the time. Let those troops be dispersed in valleys, in passes, behind ridges of hills, and in difficult ground, where a little art being used in the position can make few men supply the appearance of numbers, between this city and the western frontier of the empire. While this disposal is made, we will continue to adjust with these crusaders, as they call themselves, the terms on which we will consent to let them pass through our dominions; nor are we without hope of negotiating with them, so as to gain great advantage to our kingdom. We will insist that they pass through our country only by armies of perhaps fifty thousand at once, whom we will successively transport into Asia, so that no greater number shall, by assembling beneath our walls, ever endanger the safety of the metropolis of the world.

"On their way towards the banks of the Bosphorus, we will supply them with provisions, if they march peaceably and in order; and if any straggle from their standards, or insult the country by marauding, we suppose our valiant peasants will not hesitate to repress their excesses, and that without our giving positive orders, since he would not willingly be charged with anything like a breach of engagement. We suppose, also, that the Scythians, Arabs, Syrians, and other mercenaries in our service will not suffer our subjects to be overpowered in their own just defense; as, besides that there is no justice in stripping our own country of provisions, in order to feel strangers, we will not be surprised, nor unpardonably displeased, to learn that, of the ostensible quantity of flour, some sacks should be found filled with chalk, or lime, or some such substance. It is, indeed, truly wonderful what the stomach of a Frank will digest comfort-

ably. Their guides, also, whom you shall choose with reference to such duty, will take care to conduct the crusaders by difficult and circuitous routes; which will be doing them a real service, by inuring them to the hardships of the country and climate, which they would otherwise have to face without seasoning.

"In the mean time, in your intercourse with their chiefs, whom they call counts, each of whom thinks himself as great as an emperor, you will take care to give no offense to their natural presumption, and omit no opportunity of informing them of the wealth and bounty of our government. Sums of money may be even given to persons of note, and largesses of less avail to those under them. You, our Logothete, will take good order for this, and you, our Grand Domestic, will take care that such soldiers as may cut off detached parties of the Franks shall be presented, if possible, in savage dress, and under the show of infidels. In commending these injunctions to your care, I propose that the crusaders, having found the value of our friendship, and also in some sort the danger of our enmity, those whom we shall safely transport to Asia shall be, however unwieldy, still a smaller and more compact body, whom we may deal with in all Christian prudence. Thus, by using fair words to one, threats to another, gold to the avaricious, power to the ambitious, and reasons to those that are capable of listening to them, we doubt not but to prevail upon those Franks, met as they are from a thousand points, and enemies of each other, to acknowledge us as their common superior, rather than choose a leader among themselves, when they are made aware of the great fact that every village in Palestine, from Dan to Beersheba, is the original property of the sacred Roman empire, and that whatever Christian goes to war for their recovery must go as our subject, and hold any conquest which he may make as our vassal. Vice and virtue, sense and folly, ambition and disinterested devotion, will alike recommend to the survivors of these singular-minded men to become the feudatories of the empire, not its foe, and the shield, not the enemy, of your paternal Emperor."

There was a general inclination of the head among the courtiers, with the Eastern exclamation of, "Long live the Emperor!"

When the murmur of this applausive exclamation had subsided, Alexius proceeded—"Once more, I say that my faithful Grand Domestic, and those who act under him will take care to commit the execution of such part of these

orders as may seem aggressive to troops of foreign appearance and language, which, I grieve to say, are more numerous in our imperial army than our natural born and orthodox subjects."

The Patriarch here interposed his opinion. "There is a consolation," he said, "in the thought that the genuine Romans in the imperial army are but few, since a trade so bloody as war is most fitly prosecuted by those whose doctrines, as well as their doings, on earth merit eternal condemnation in the next world."

"Reverend Patriarch," said the Emperor, "we would not willingly hold, with the wild infidels, that Paradise is to be gained by the saber; nevertheless, we would hope that a Roman dying in battle for his religion and his Emperor may find as good hope of acceptation, after the mortal pang is over, as a man who dies in peace, and with unbloodied hand."

"It is enough for me to say," resumed the Patriarch, "that the church's doctrine is not so indulgent; she is her self peaceful, and her promises of favor are for those who have been men of peace. Yet think not I bar the gates of Heaven against a soldier, as such, if believing all the doctrines of our church, and complying with all our observances; far less would I condemn your Imperial Majesty's wise precautions, both for diminishing the power and thinning the ranks of those Latin heretics, who come hither to despoil us, and plunder perhaps both church and temple, under the vain pretext that Heaven would permit them, stained with so many heresies, to reconquer that Holy Land which true orthodox Christians, your Majesty's sacred predecessors, have not been enabled to retain from the infidel. And well I trust that no settlement made under the Latins will be permitted by your Majesty to establish itself in which the cross shall not be elevated with limbs of the same length, instead of that irregular and most damnable error which prolongs, in Western churches, the nether limb of that most holy emblem."

"Reverend Patriarch," answered the Emperor, "do not deem that we think lightly of your weighty scruples; but the question is now, not in what manner we may convert these Latin heretics to the true faith, but how we may avoid being overrun by their myriads, which resemble those of the locusts by which their approach was preceded and intimated."

"Your Majesty," said the Patriarch, "will act with your

usual wisdom; for my part, I have only stated my doubts, that I may save my own soul alive."

"Our construction," said the Emperor, "does your sentiments no wrong, most reverend Patriarch; and you," addressing himself to the other counselors, "will attend to these separate charges given out for directing the execution of the commands which have been generally intimated to you. They are written out in the sacred ink, and our sacred subscription is duly marked with the fitting tinge of green and purple. Let them, therefore, be strictly obeyed. Ourselves will assume the command of such of the Immortal Bands as remain in the city, and join to them the cohorts of our faithful Varangians. At the head of these troops we will await the arrival of these strangers under the walls of the city, and, avoiding combat while our policy can postpone it, we will be ready, in case of the worst, to take whatsoever chance it shall please the Almighty to send us."

Here the council broke up, and the different chiefs began to exert themselves in the execution of their various instructions, civil and military, secret or public, favorable or hostile to the crusaders. The peculiar genius of the Grecian people was seen upon this occasion. Their loud and boastful talking corresponded with the ideas which the Emperor wished to enforce upon the crusaders concerning the extent of his power and resources. Nor is it to be disguised that the wily selfishness of most of those in the service of Alexius endeavored to find some indirect way of applying the imperial instruction so as might best suit their own private ends.

Meantime, the news had gone abroad in Constantinople of the arrival of the huge miscellaneous army of the West upon the limits of the Grecian empire, and of their purpose to pass to Palestine. A thousand reports magnified, if that was possible, an event so wonderful. Some said that their ultimate view was the conquest of Arabia, the destruction of the Prophet's tomb, and the conversion of his green banner into a horse-cloth for the king of France's brother. Others supposed that the ruin and sack of Constantinople was the real object of the war. A third class thought it was in order to compel the Patriarch to submit himself to the Pope, adopt the Latin form of the cross, and put an end to the schism.

The Varangians enjoyed an addition to this wonderful news, seasoned as it everywhere was with something peculiarly suited to the prejudices of the hearers. It was

gathered originally from what our friend Hereward, who was one of their inferior officers, called sergeants or constables, had suffered to transpire of what he had heard the preceding evening. Considering that the fact must be soon matter of notoriety, he had no hesitation to give his comrades to understand that a Norman army was coming hither under Duke Robert, the son of the far-famed William the Conqueror, and with hostile intentions, he concluded, against them in particular. Like all other men in peculiar circumstances, the Varangians adopted an explanation applicable to their own condition. These Normans, who hated the Saxon nation, and had done so much to dishonor and oppress them, were now following them, they supposed, to the foreign capital where they had found refuge, with the purpose of making war on the bountiful prince who protected their sad remnant. Under this belief, many a deep oath was sworn in Norse and Anglo-Saxon, that their keen battle-axes should avenge the slaughter of Hastings, and many a pledge, both in wine and ale, was quaffed, who should most deeply resent and most effectually revenge the wrongs which the Anglo-Saxons of England had received at the hand of their oppressors.

Hereward, the author of this intelligence, began soon to be sorry that he had ever suffered it to escape him, so closely was he cross-examined concerning its precise import, by the inquiries of his comrades, from whom he thought himself obliged to keep concealed the adventures of the preceding evening, and the place in which he had gained his information.

About noon, when he was effectually tired with returning the same answer to the same questions, and evading similar others which were repeatedly put to him, the sound of trumpets announced the presence of the Acolyte Achilles Tatius, who came immediately, it was industriously whispered, from the sacred interior, with news of the immediate approach of war.

The Varangians and the Roman bands called Immortal, it was said, were to form a camp under the city, in order to be prompt to defend it at the shortest notice. This put the whole barracks into commotion, each man making the necessary provision for the approaching campaign. The noise was chiefly that of joyful bustle and acclamation ; and it was so general, that Hereward, whose rank permitted him to commit to a page, or esquire, the task of preparing his equipments, took the opportunity to leave the barracks, in

order to seek some distant place apart from his comrades, and enjoy his solitary reflections upon the singular connection into which he had been drawn, and his direct communication with the imperial family.

Passing through the narrow streets, then deserted on account of the heat of the sun, he reached at length one of those broad terraces which, descending, as it were by steps, upon the margin of the Bosphorus, formed one of the most splendid walks in the universe, and still, it is believed, preserved as a public promenade for the pleasure of the Turks, as formerly for that of the Christians. These graduated terraces were planted with many trees, among which the cypress, as usual, was most generally cultivated. Here bands of the inhabitants were to be seen—some passing to and fro, with business and anxiety in their faces; some standing still in groups, as if discussing the strange and weighty tidings of the day; and some, with the indolent carelessness of an Eastern climate, eating their noontide refreshment in the shade, and spending their time as if their sole object was to make much of the day as it passed, and let the cares of to-morrow answer for themselves.

While the Varangian, afraid of meeting some acquaintance in this concourse, which would have been inconsistent with the desire of seclusion which had brought him thither, descended or passed from one terrace to another, all marked him with looks of curiosity and inquiry, considering him to be one who, from his arms and connection with the court, must necessarily know more than others concerning the singular invasion by numerous enemies, and from various quarters, which was the news of the day. None, however, had the hardihood to address the soldier of the guard, though all looked at him with uncommon interest. He walked from the lighter to the darker alleys, from the more closed to the more open terraces, without interruption from any one, yet not without a feeling that he must not consider himself as alone.

The desire that he felt to be solitary rendered him at last somewhat watchful, so that he became sensible that he was dogged by a black slave, a personage not so unfrequent in the streets of Constantinople as to excite any particular notice. His attention, however, being at length fixed on this individual, he began to be desirous to escape his observation; and the change of place which he had at first adopted to avoid society in general he had now recourse to, in order to rid himself of this distant, though apparently

watchful, attendant. Still, however, though he by change of place had lost sight of the negro for a few minutes, it was not long ere he again discovered him, at a distance too far for a companion, but near enough to serve all the purposes of a spy. Displeased at this, the Varangian turned short in his walk, and, choosing a spot where none was in sight but the object of his resentment, walked suddenly up to him, and demanded wherefore, and by whose orders, he presumed to dog his footsteps. The negro answered in a jargon as bad as that in which he was addressed, though of a different kind, "that he had orders to remark whither he went."

"Orders from whom?" said the Varangian.

"From my master and yours," answered the negro, boldly.

"Thou infidel villain!" exclaimed the angry soldier, "when was it that we became fellow-servants, and who is it that thou darest to call my master?"

"One who is master of the world," said the slave, "since he commands his own passions."

"I shall scarce command mine," said the Varangian, "if thou repliest to my earnest questions with thine affected quirks of philosophy. Once more, what dost thou want with me? and why hast thou the boldness to watch me?"

"I have told thee already," said the slave, "that I do my master's commands."

"But I must know who thy master is," said Hereward.

"He must tell thee that himself," replied the negro: "he trusts not a poor slave like me with the purpose of the errands on which he sends me."

"He has left thee a tongue, however," said the Varangian, "which some of thy countrymen would, I think, be glad to possess. Do not provoke me to abridge it by refusing me the information which I have a right to demand."

The black meditated, as it seemed from the grin on his face, further evasions, when Hereward cut them short by raising the staff of his battle-ax. "Put me not," he said, "to dishonor myself by striking thee with this weapon, calculated for a use so much more noble."

"I may not do so, valiant sir," said the negro, laying aside an impudent, half-gibing tone which he had hitherto made use of, and betraying personal fear in his manner. "If you beat the poor slave to death, you cannot learn what his master hath forbid him to tell. A short walk will save your honor the stain, and yourself the trouble, of beating what

cannot resist, and me the pain of enduring what I can neither retaliate nor avoid."

"Lead on, then," said the Varangian. "Be assured thou shalt not fool me by thy fair words, and I will know the person who is impudent enough to assume the right of watching my motions."

The black walked on with a species of leer peculiar to his physiognomy, which might be construed as expressive either of malice or of mere humor. The Varangian followed him with some suspicion, for it happened that he had had little intercourse with the unhappy race of Africa, and had not totally overcome the feeling of surprise with which he had at first regarded them when he arrived a stranger from the North. So often did this man look back upon him during their walk, and with so penetrating and observing a cast of countenance, that Hereward felt irresistibly renewed in his mind the English prejudices which assigned to the demons the sable color and distorted cast of visage of his conductor. The scene into which he was guided strengthened an association which was not of itself unlikely to occur to the ignorant and martial islander.

The negro led the way from the splendid terraced walks which we have described to a path descending to the seashore, when a place appeared which, far from being trimmed, like other parts of the coast, into walks or embankments, seemed, on the contrary, abandoned to neglect, and was covered with the moldering ruins of antiquity, where these had not been overgrown by the luxuriant vegetation of the climate. These fragments of building, occupying a sort of recess of the bay, were hidden by steep banks on each side, and although, in fact, they formed part of the city, yet they were not seen from any part of it, and, embosomed in the manner we have described, did not in turn command any view of the churches, palaces, towers, and fortifications amongst which they lay. The sight of this solitary, and apparently deserted, spot, encumbered with ruins and overgrown with cypress and other trees, situated as it was in the midst of a populous city, had something in it impressive and awful to the imagination. The ruins were of an ancient date, and in the style of a foreign people. The gigantic remains of a portico, the mutilated fragments of statues of great size, but executed in a taste and attitude so narrow and barbaric as to seem perfectly the reverse of the Grecian, and the half-defaced hieroglyphics which could be traced on some part of the decayed sculpture, corrobo-

rated the popular account of their origin, which we shall briefly detail.

According to tradition, this had been a temple dedicated to the Egyptian goddess Cybele, built while the Roman empire was yet heathen, and while Constantinople was still called by the name of Byzantium. It is well known that the superstition of the Egyptians—vulgarly gross in its literal meaning as well as in its mystical interpretation, and peculiarly the foundation of many wild doctrines—was disowned by the principles of general toleration, and the system of polytheism received by Rome, and was excluded by repeated laws from the respect paid by the empire to almost every other religion, however extravagant or absurd. Nevertheless, these Egyptian rites had charms for the curious and the superstitious, and had, after long opposition, obtained a footing in the empire.

Still, although tolerated, the Egyptian priests were rather considered as sorcerers than as pontiffs, and their whole ritual had a nearer relation to magic, in popular estimation, than to any regular system of devotion.

Stained with these accusations, even among the heathen themselves, the worship of Egypt was held in more mortal abhorrence by the Christians than the other and more rational kinds of heathen devotion—that is, if any at all had a right to be termed so. The brutal worship of Apis and Cybele was regarded not only as a pretext for obscene and profligate pleasures, but as having a direct tendency to open and encourage a dangerous commerce with evil spirits, who were supposed to take upon themselves, at these unhallowed altars, the names and characters of these foul deities. Not only, therefore, the temple of Cybele, with its gigantic portico, its huge and inelegant statues, and its fantastic hieroglyphics, was thrown down and defaced when the empire was converted to the Christian faith, but the very ground on which it stood was considered as polluted and unhallowed ; and no emperor having yet occupied the site with a Christian church, the place still remained neglected and deserted, as we have described it.

The Varangian Hereward was perfectly acquainted with the evil reputation of the place ; and when the negro seemed disposed to advance into the interior of the ruins, he hesitated, and addressed his guide thus : "Hark thee, my black friend, these huge fantastic images, some having dogs' heads, some cows' heads, and some no heads at all, are not held reverently in popular estimation. Your own color, also,

my comrade, is greatly too like that of Satan himself to render you an unsuspicious companion amid ruins in which the false spirit, it is said, daily walks his rounds. Midnight and noon are the times, it is rumored, of his appearance. I will go no farther with you, unless you assign me a fit reason for so doing."

"In making so childish a proposal," said the negro, "you take from me, in effect, all desire to guide you to my master. I thought I spoke to a man of invincible courage, and of that good sense upon which courage is best founded. But your valor only emboldens you to beat a black slave, who has neither strength nor title to resist you; and your courage is not enough to enable you to look without trembling on the dark side of a wall, even when the sun is in the heaven."

"Thou art insolent," said Hereward, raising his ax.

"And thou art foolish," said the negro, "to attempt to prove thy manhood and thy wisdom by the very mode which gives reason for calling them both in question. I have already said there can be little valor in beating a wretch like me; and no man, surely, who wishes to discover his way would begin by chasing away his guide."

"I follow thee," said Hereward, stung with the insinuation of cowardice; "but if thou leadest me into a snare, thy free talk shall not save thy bones, if a thousand of thy complexion from earth or hell were standing ready to back thee."

"Thou objectest sorely to my complexion," said the negro; "how knowest thou that it is, in fact, a thing to be counted and acted upon as matter of reality? Thine own eyes daily apprise thee that the color of the sky nightly changes from bright to black, yet thou knowest that this is by no means owing to any habitual color of the heavens themselves. The same change that takes place in the hue of the heavens has existence in the tinge of the deep sea. How canst thou tell but what the difference of my color from thine own may be owing to some deceptious change of a similar nature—not real in itself, but only creating an apparent reality?"

"Thou mayest have painted thyself, no doubt," answered the Varangian, upon reflection, "and thy blackness, therefore, may be only apparent; but I think thy old friend himself could hardly have presented these grinning lips, with the white teeth and flattened nose, so much to the life, unless that peculiarity of Nubian physiognomy, as they call it, had accurately and really an existence; and, to save thee

some trouble, my dark friend, I will tell thee that, though thou speakest to an uneducated Varangian, I am not entirely unskilled in the Grecian art of making subtle words pass upon the hearers instead of reason."

"Ay?" said the negro, doubtfully, and somewhat surprised; "and may the slave Diogenes—for so my master has christened me—inquire into the means by which you reached knowledge so unusual?"

"It is soon told," replied Hereward. "My countryman, Witikind, being a constable of our bands, retired from active service, and spent the end of a long life in this city of Constantinople. Being past all toils of battle, either those of reality, as you word it, or the pomp and fatigue of the exercising ground, the poor old man, in despair of something to pass his time, attended the lectures of the philosophers."

"And what did he learn there?" said the negro; "for a barbarian grown gray under the helmet, was not, as I think, a very hopeful student in our schools."

"As much, though, I should think, as a menial slave, which I understand to be thy condition," replied the soldier. "But I have understood from him that the masters of this idle science make it their business to substitute, in their argumentations, mere words instead of ideas; and as they never agree upon the precise meaning of the former, their disputes can never arrive at a fair or settled conclusion, since they do not agree in the language in which they express them. Their theories, as they call them, are built on the sand, and the wind and tide shall prevail against them."

"Say so to my master," answered the black, in a serious tone.

"I will," said the Varangian; "and he shall know me as an ignorant soldier, having but few ideas, and those only concerning my religion and my military duty. But out of these opinions I will neither be beaten by a battery of sophisms nor cheated by the arts or the terrors of the friends of heathenism, either in this world or the next."

"You may speak your mind to him, then, yourself," said Diogenes. He stepped to one side, as if to make way for the Varangian, to whom he motioned to go forward.

Hereward advanced accordingly, by a half-worn and almost imperceptible path leading through the long rough grass, and, turning round a half-demolished shrine, which exhibited the remains of Apis, the bovine deity, he came immediately in front of the philosopher, Agelastes, who, sitting among the ruins, reposed his limbs on the grass.

CHAPTER VIII

Through the vain webs which puzzle sophists' skill,
Plain sense and honest meaning work their way;
So sink the varying clouds upon the hill,
When the clear dawning brightens into day.

DR. WATTS.

THE old man rose from the ground with alacrity, as Hereward approached. "My bold Varangian," he said, "thou who valuest men and things not according to the false estimate ascribed to them in this world, but to their real importance and actual value, thou art welcome, whatever has brought thee hither—thou art welcome to a place where it is held the best business of philosophy to strip man of his borrowed ornaments, and reduce him to the just value of his own attributes of body and mind, singly considered."

"You are a courtier, sir," said the Saxon, "and, as a permitted companion of the Emperor's Highness, you must be aware that there are twenty times more ceremonies than such a man as I can be acquainted with for regulating the different ranks in society; while a plain man like myself may be well excused from pushing himself into the company of those above him, where he does not exactly know how he should comport himself."

"True," said the philosopher; "but a man like yourself, noble Hereward, merits more consideration in the eyes of a real philosopher than a thousand of those mere insects whom the smiles of a court call into life, and whom its frowns reduce to annihilation."

"You are yourself, grave sir, a follower of the court," said Hereward.

"And a most punctilious one," said Agelastes. "There is not, I trust, a subject in the Empire who knows better the ten thousand punctilios exigible from those of different ranks, and due to different authorities. The man is yet to be born who has seen me take advantage of any more commodious posture than that of standing in presence of the royal family. But though I use those false scales in society, and so far conform to its errors my real judgment is of a

more grave character, and more worthy of man, as said to be formed in the image of his Creator."

"There can be small occasion," said the Varangian, "to exercise your judgment in any respect upon me, nor am I desirous that any one should think of me otherwise than I am—a poor exile, namely, who endeavors to fix his faith upon Heaven, and to perform his duty to the world he lives in, and to the prince in whose service he is engaged. And now, grave sir, permit me to ask whether this meeting is by your desire, and for what is its purpose? An African slave, whom I met in the public walks, and who calls himself Diogenes, tells me that you desired to speak with me; he hath somewhat the humor of the old scoffer, and so he may have lied. If so, I will even forgive him the beating which I owe his assurance, and make my excuse at the same time for having broken in upon your retirement, which I am totally unfit to share."

"Diogenes has not played you false," answered Agelastes; "he has his humors, as you remarked even now, and with these some qualities also that put him upon a level with those of fairer complexion and better features."

"And for what," said the Varangian, "have you so employed him? Can your wisdom possibly entertain a wish to converse with me?"

"I am an observer of nature and of humanity," answered the philosopher; "is it not natural that I should tire of those beings who are formed entirely upon artifice, and long to see something more fresh from the hand of nature?"

"You see not that in me," said the Varangian: "the rigor of military discipline, the camp, the centurion, the armor frame a man's sentiments and limbs to them, as the sea-crab is framed to its shell. See one of us, and you see us all."

"Permit me to doubt that," said Agelastes, "and to suppose that, in Hereward, the son of Waltheoff, I see an extraordinary man, although he himself may be ignorant, owing to his modesty, of the rarity of his own good qualities."

"The son of Waltheoff!" answered the Varangian, somewhat startled. "Do you know my father's name?"

"Be not surprised," answered the philosopher, "at my possessing so simple a piece of information. It has cost me but little trouble to attain it, yet I would gladly hope that the labor I have taken in that matter may convince you of my real desire to call you friend."

"It was indeed an unusual compliment," said Hereward,

"that a man of your knowledge and station should be at the trouble to inquire among the Varangian cohorts concerning the descent of one of their constables. I scarcely think that my commander, the Acolyte himself, would think such knowledge worthy of being collected or preserved."

"Greater men than he," said Agelastes, "certainly would not—— You know one in high office who thinks the names of his most faithful soldiers of less moment than those of his hunting dogs or his hawks, and would willingly save himself the trouble of calling them otherwise than by a whistle."

"I may not hear this," answered the Varangian.

"I would not offend you," said the philosopher, "I would not even shake your good opinion of the person I allude to; yet it surprises me that such should be entertained by one of your great qualities."

"A truce with this, grave sir, which is in fact trifling in a person of your character and appearance," answered the Anglo-Saxon. "I am like the rocks of my country: the fierce winds cannot shake me, the soft rains cannot melt me, flattery and loud words are alike lost upon me."

"And it is even for that inflexibility of mind," replied Agelastes, "that steady contempt of everything that approaches thee, save in the light of a duty, that I demand, almost like a beggar, that personal acquaintance which thou refusest like a churl."

"Pardon me," said Hereward, "if I doubt this. Whatever stories you may have picked up concerning me, not unexaggerated probably—since the Greeks do not keep the privilege of boasting so entirely to themselves but the Varangians have learned a little of it—you can have heard nothing of me which can authorize your using your present language, excepting in jest."

"You mistake, my son," said Agelastes; "believe me not a person to mix in the idle talk respecting you with your comrades at the ale-cup. Such as I am, I can strike on this broken image of Anubis (here he touched a gigantic fragment of a statue by his side), and bid the spirit who long prompted the oracle descend and once more reanimate the trembling mass. We that are initiated enjoy high privileges: we stamp upon those ruined vaults, and the echo which dwells there answers to our demand. Do not think that, although I crave thy friendship, I need therefore supplicate thee for information either respecting thyself or others."

"Your words are wonderful," said the Anglo-Saxon; 'but by such promising words I have heard that many souls have been seduced from the path of Heaven. My grandsire, Kenelm, was wont to say that the fair words of the heathen philosophy were more hurtful to the Christian faith than the menaces of the heathen tyrants."

"I knew him," said Agelastes. "What avails it whether it was in the body or in the spirit? He was converted from the faith of Woden by a noble monk, and died a priest at the shrine of St. Augustine." *

"True," said Hereward—"all this is certain, and I am the rather bound to remember his words now that he is dead and gone. When I hardly knew his meaning, he bid me beware of the doctrine which causeth to err, which is taught by false prophets, who attest their doctrine by unreal miracles."

"This," said Agelastes, "is mere superstition. Thy grandsire was a good and excellent man, but narrow-minded, like other priests; and, deceived by their example, he wished but to open a small wicket in the gate of truth, and admit the world only on that limited scale. Seest thou, Hereward, thy grandsire and most men of religion would fain narrow our intellect to the consideration of such parts of the immaterial world as are essential to our moral guidance here and our final salvation hereafter; but it is not the less true that man has liberty, provided he has wisdom and courage, to form intimacies with beings more powerful than himself, who can defy the bounds of space by which he is circumscribed, and overcome, by their metaphysical powers, difficulties which, to the timid and unlearned, may appear wild and impossible."

"You talk of a folly," answered Hereward, "at which childhood gapes and manhood smiles."

"On the contrary," said the sage, "I talk of a longing wish which every man feels at the bottom of his heart to hold communication with beings more powerful than himself, and who are not naturally accessible to our organs. Believe me, Hereward, so ardent and universal an aspiration had not existed in our bosoms had there not also been means, if steadily and wisely sought, of attaining its accomplishment. I will appeal to thine own heart, and prove to thee, even by a single word, that what I say is truth. Thy thoughts are even now upon a being long absent or dead, and with the name of BERTHA a thousand emotions rush to

*At Canterbury.

thy heart, which in thy ignorance thou hadst esteemed furled up forever, like spoils of the dead hung above a tombstone! Thou startest and changest thy color: I joy to see by these signs that the firmness and indomitable courage which men ascribe to thee have left the avenues of the heart as free as ever to kindly and to generous affections, while they have barred them against those of fear, uncertainty, and all the caitiff tribe of meaner sensations. I have proffered to esteem thee, and I have no hesitation in proving it. I will tell thee, if thou desirest to know it, the fate of that very Bertha whose memory thou hast cherished in thy breast in spite of thee, amidst the toil of the day and the repose of the night, in the battle and in the truce, when sporting with thy companions in fields of exercise, or attempting to prosecute the study of Greek learning, in which, if thou wouldst advance, I can teach it by a short road."

While Agelastes thus spoke, the Varangian in some degree recovered his composure, and made answer, though his voice was somewhat tremulous—"Who thou art, I know not; what thou wouldst with me, I cannot tell; by what means thou hast gathered intelligence of such consequence to me, and of so little to another, I have no conception; but this I know, that by intention or accident thou hast pronounced a name which agitates my heart to its deepest recesses; yet am I a Christian and Varangian, and neither to my God nor to my adopted prince will I willingly stagger in my faith. What is to be wrought by idols or by false deities must be a treason to the real divinity. Nor is it less certain that thou hast let glance some arrows, though the rules of thy allegiance strictly forbid it, at the Emperor himself. Henceforward, therefore, I refuse to communicate with thee, be it for weal or wo. I am the Emperor's waged soldier, and although I affect not the nice precisions of respect and obedience which are exacted in so many various cases and by so many various rules, yet I am his defense, and my battle-ax is his body-guard."

"No one doubts it," said the philosopher. "But art not thou also bound to a nearer dependence upon the great Acolyte, Achilles Tatius?"

"No. He is my general, according to the rules of our service," answered the Varangian; "to me he has always shown himself a kind and good-natured man, and, his dues of rank apart, I may say has deported himself as a friend rather than a commander. He is, however, my master's servant as well as I am; nor do I hold the difference of great

amount which the word of a man can give or take away at pleasure."

"It is nobly spoken," said Agelastes; "and you yourself are surely entitled to stand erect before one whom you supersede in courage and in the art of war."

"Pardon me," returned the Briton, "if I decline the attributed compliment, as what in no respect belongs to me. The Emperor chooses his own officers, in respect of their power of serving him as he desires to be served. In this it is likely I might fail; I have said already I owe my Emperor my obedience, my duty, and my service, nor does it seem to me necessary to carry our explanation farther."

"Singular man!" said Agelastes; "is there nothing that can move thee but things that are foreign to thyself? The name of thy Emperor and thy commander are no spell upon thee, and even that of the object thou hast loved——"

Here the Varangian interrupted him.

"I have thought," he said, "upon the words thou hast spoken—thou hast found the means to shake my heart-strings, but not to unsettle my principles. I will hold no converse with thee on a matter in which thou canst not have interest. Necromancers, it is said, perform their spells by means of the epithets of the Holiest; no marvel, then, should they use the names of the purest of His creation to serve their unhallowed purposes. I will none of such struckling, disgraceful to the dead perhaps as to the living. Whatever has been thy purpose, old man—for think not thy strange words have passed unnoticed—be thou assured I bear that in my heart which defies alike the seduction of men and of fiends."

With this the soldier turned and left the ruined temple, after a slight inclination of his head to the philosopher.

Agelastes, after the departure of the soldier, remained alone, apparently absorbed in meditation, until he was suddenly disturbed by the entrance into the ruins of Achilles Tatius. The leader of the Varangians spoke not until he had time to form some result from the philosopher's features. He then said, "Thou remainest, sage Agelastes, confident in the purpose of which we have lately spoke together?"

"I do," said Agelastes, with gravity and firmness.

"But," replied Achilles Tatius, "thou has not gained to our side that proselyte whose coolness and courage would serve us better in our hour of need than the service of a thousand cold-hearted slaves?"

"I have not succeeded," answered the philosopher.

"And thou dost not blush to own it?" said the imperial officer in reply. "Thou, the wisest of those who yet pretend to Grecian wisdom, the most powerful of those who still assert the skill by words, signs, names, periapts, and spells to exceed the sphere to which thy faculties belong, hast been foiled in thy trade of persuasion, like an infant worsted in debate with its domestic tutor? Out upon thee, that thou canst not sustain in argument the character which thou wouldst so fain assume to thyself!"

"Peace!" said the Grecian. "I have as yet gained nothing, it is true, over this obstinate and inflexible man; but, Achilles Tatius, neither have I lost. We both stand where yesterday we did, with this advantage on my side, that I have suggested to him such an object of interest as he shall never be able to expel from his mind, until he hath had recourse to me to obtain farther knowledge concerning it. And now let this singular person remain for a time unmentioned; yet trust me, though flattery, avarice, and ambition may fail to gain him, a bait nevertheless remains that shall make him as completely our own as any that is bound within our mystic and inviolable contract. Tell me, then, how go on the affairs of the empire? Does this tide of Latin warriors, so strangely set aflowing, still rush on to the banks of the Bosphorus? and does Alexius still entertain hopes to diminish and divide the strength of numbers which he could in vain hope to defy?"

"Something further of intelligence has been gained, even within a very few hours," answered Achilles Tatius. "Bohemond came to the city with some six or eight light horse, and in a species of disguise. Considering how often he had been the Emperor's enemy, his project was a perilous one. But when is it that these Franks draw back on account of danger? The Emperor perceived at once that the Count was come to see what he might obtain by presenting himself as the very first object of his liberality, and by offering his assistance as mediator with Godfrey of Bouillon and the other princes of the crusade."

"It is a species of policy," answered the sage, "for which he would receive full credit from the Emperor."

Achilles Tatius proceeded—"Count Bohemond was discovered to the imperial court as if it were by mere accident, and he was welcomed with marks of favor and splendor which had never been even mentioned as being fit for any one of the Frankish race. There was no word of ancient enmity or former wars, no mention of Bohemond as the an-

cient usurper of Antioch, and the encroacher upon the empire. But thanks to Heaven were returned on all sides, which had sent a faithful ally to the imperial assistance at a moment of such imminent peril."

"And what said Bohemond?" inquired the philosopher.

"Little or nothing," said the captain of the Varangians, "until, as I learned from the domestic slave Narses, a large sum of gold had been abandoned to him. Considerable districts were afterwards agreed to be ceded to him, and other advantages granted, on condition he should stand on this occasion the steady friend of the empire and its master. Such was the Emperor's munificence towards the greedy barbarian, that a chamber in the palace was, by chance, as it were, left exposed to his view, containing large quantities of manufactured silks, of jewelers' work, of gold and silver, and other articles of great value. When the rapacious Frank could not forbear some expressions of admiration, he was assured that the contents of the treasure-chamber were his own, provided he valued them as showing forth the warmth and sincerity of his imperial ally towards his friends; and these precious articles were accordingly conveyed to the tent of the Norman leader. By such measures the Emperor must make himself master of Bohemond, both body and soul; for the Franks themselves say it is strange to see a man of undaunted bravery and towering ambition so infected, nevertheless, with avarice, which they term a mean and unnatural vice."

"Bohemond," said Agelastes, "is then the Emperor's for life and death—always, that is, till the recollection of the royal munificence be effaced by a greater gratuity. Alexius, proud as he naturally is of his management with this important chieftain, will no doubt expect to prevail by his counsels on most of the other crusaders, and even on Godfrey of Bouillon himself, to take an oath of submission and fidelity to the Emperor, which, were it not for the sacred nature of their warfare, the meanest gentleman among them would not submit to, were it to be lord of a province. There, then, we rest. A few days must determine what we have to do. An earlier discovery would be destruction."

"We meet not, then, to-night?" said the Acolyte.

"No," replied the sage; "unless we are summoned to that foolish stage-play or recitation; and then we meet as play things in the hand of a silly woman, the spoiled child of a weak-minded parent."

Tatius then took his leave of the philosopher, and, as if

fearful of being seen in each other's company, they left their solitary place of meeting by different routes. The Varangian, Hereward, received, shortly after, a summons from his superior, who acquainted him that he should not, as formerly intimated, require his attendance that evening.

Achilles then paused, and added—"Thou hast something on thy lips thou wouldst say to me, which, nevertheless, hesitates to break forth."

"It is only this," answered the soldier: "I have had an interview with the man called Agelastes, and he seems something so different from what he appeared when we last spoke of him, that I cannot forbear mentioning to you what I have seen. He is not an insignificant trifler, whose object it is to raise a laugh at his own expense or that of any other. He is a deep-thinking and far-reaching man, who, for some reason or other, is desirous of forming friends, and drawing a party to himself. Your own wisdom will teach you to beware of him."

"Thou art an honest fellow, my poor Hereward," said Achilles Tatius, with an affectation of good-natured contempt. "Such men as Agelastes do often frame their severest jests in the shape of formal gravity: they will pretend to possess the most unbounded power over elements and elemental spirits, they will make themselves masters of the names and anecdotes best known to those whom they make their sport; and any one who shall listen to them shall, in the words of the divine Homer, only expose himself to a flood of inextinguishable laughter. I have often known him select one of the rawest and most ignorant persons in presence, and to him, for the amusement of the rest, he has pretended to cause the absent to appear, the distant to draw near, and the dead themselves to burst the cerements of the grave. Take care, Hereward, that his arts make not a stain on the credit of one of my bravest Varangians."

"There is no danger," answered Hereward. "I shall not be fond of being often with this man. If he jests upon one subject which he hath mentioned to me, I shall be but too likely to teach him seriousness after a rough manner. And if he is serious in his pretensions in such mystical matters, we should, according to the faith of my grandfather, Kenelm, do insult to the deceased, whose name is taken in the mouth of a soothsayer or impious enchanter. I will not, therefore, again go near this Agelastes, be he wizard or be he impostor."

"You apprehend me not," said the Acolyte, hastily—"you mistake my meaning. He is a man from whom, if

he pleases to converse with such as you, you may derive much knowledge, keeping out of the reach of those pretended secret arts, which he will only use to turn thee into ridicule." With these words, which he himself would perhaps have felt it difficult to reconcile, the leader and his follower parted.

CHAPTER IX

Between the foaming jaws of the white torrent
The skilful artist draws a sudden mound ;
By level long he subdivides their strength,
Stealing the waters from their rocky bed,
First to diminish what he means to conquer ;
Then, from the residue he forms a road,
Easy to keep, and painful to desert,
And guiding to the end the planner aim'd at.

The Engineer.

It would have been easy for Alexius, by a course of avowed suspicion, or any false step in the manner of receiving this tumultuary invasion of the European nations, to have blown into a flame the numerous but smothered grievances under which they labored ; and a similiar catastrophe would not have been less certain, had he at once abandoned all thoughts of resistance, and placed his hope of safety in surrendering to the multitudes of the West whatsoever they accounted worth taking. The Emperor chose a middle course ; and, unquestionably, in the weakness of the Greek empire, it was the only one which would have given him at once safety and a great degree of consequence in the eyes of the Frank invaders, and those of his own subjects. The means with which he acted were of various kinds, and, rather from policy than inclination, were often stained with falsehood or meanness ; therefore it follows that the measures of the Emperor resembled those of the snake, who twines himself through the grass, with the purpose of stinging insidiously those whom he fears to approach with the step of the bold and generous lion. We are not, however, writing the history of the crusades, and what we have already said of the Emperor's precautions on the first appearance of Godfrey of Bouillon and his associates may suffice for the elucidation of our story.

About four weeks had now passed over, marked by quarrels and reconcilements between the crusaders and the Grecians of the empire. The former were, as Alexius's policy dictated, occasionally and individually received with

extreme honor, and their leaders loaded with respect and favor; while, from time to time, such bodies of them as sought distant or circuitous routes to the capital were intercepted and cut to pieces by light-armed troops, who easily passed upon their ignorant opponents for Turks, Scythians, or other infidels, and sometimes were actually such, but in the service of the Grecian monarch. Often, too, it happened that, while the more powerful chiefs of the crusade were feasted by the Emperor and his ministers with the richest delicacies, and their thirst slaked with iced wines, their followers were left at a distance, where, intentionally supplied with adulterated flour, tainted provisions, and bad water, they contracted diseases, and died in great numbers, without having once seen a foot of the Holy Land, for the recovery of which they had abandoned their peace, their competence, and their native country. These aggressions did not pass without complaint. Many of the crusading chiefs impugned the fidelity of their allies, exposed the losses sustained by their armies as evils voluntarily inflicted on them by the Greeks, and on more than one occasion the two nations stood opposed to each other on such terms that a general war seemed to be inevitable.

Alexius, however, though obliged to have recourse to every finesse, still kept his ground, and made peace with the most powerful chiefs, under one pretense or other. The actual losses of the crusaders by the sword he imputed to their own aggressions; their misguidance, to accident and to wilfulness; the effects produced on them by the adulterated provisions, to the vehemence of their own appetite for raw fruits and unripened wines. In short, there was no disaster of any kind whatsoever which could possibly befall the unhappy pilgrims but the Emperor stood prepared to prove that it was the natural consequence of their own violence, wilfulness of conduct, or hostile precipitancy.

The chiefs, who were not ignorant of their strength, would not, it was likely, have tamely suffered injuries from a power so inferior to their own, were it not that they had formed extravagant ideas of the wealth of the Eastern empire, which Alexius seemed willing to share with them with an excess of bounty as new to the leaders as the rich productions of the East were tempting to their followers.

The French nobles would perhaps have been the most difficult to be brought into order when differences arose, but an accident, which the Emperor might have termed providential, reduced the high-spirited Count of Ver-

mandois to the situation of a suppliant, when he expected to hold that of a dictator. A fierce tempest surprised his fleet after he set sail from Italy, and he was finally driven on the coast of Greece. Many ships were destroyed, and those troops who got ashore were so much distressed that they were obliged to surrender themselves to the lieutenants of Alexius. So that the Count of Vermandois, so haughty in his bearing when he first embarked, was sent to the court of Constantinople not as a prince, but as a prisoner. In this case, the Emperor instantly set the soldiers at liberty, and loaded them with presents.*

Grateful, therefore, for attentions in which Alexius was unremitting, Count Hugh was, by gratitude as well as interest, inclined to join the opinion of those who, for other reasons, desired the subsistence of peace betwixt the crusaders and the empire of Greece. A better principle determined the celebrated Godfrey, Raymond of Tholouse, and some others, in whom devotion was something more than a mere burst of fanaticism. These princes considered with what scandal their whole journey must be stained, if the first of their exploits should be a war upon the Grecian empire, which might justly be called the barrier of Christendom. If it was weak and at the same time rich—if at the same time it invited rapine and was unable to protect itself against it—it was the more their interest and duty, as Christian soldiers, to protect a Christian state whose existence was of so much consequence to the common cause, even when it could not defend itself. It was the wish of these frank-hearted men to receive the Emperor's professions of friendship with such sincere returns of amity, to return his kindness with so much usury, as to convince him that their purpose towards him was in every respect fair and honorable, and that it would be his interest to abstain from every injurious treatment which might induce or compel them to alter their measures towards him.

It was with this accommodating spirit towards Alexius, which, for many different and complicated reasons, had now aminated most of the crusaders, that the chiefs consented to a measure which, in other circumstances, they would probably have refused, as undue to the Greeks and dishonorable to themselves. This was the famous resolution that, before crossing the Bosphorus to go in quest of that Palestine which they had vowed to regain, each chief of crusaders would acknowledge individually the Grecian Em-

* See Miles's *History of the Crusades*, vol. i. [chap. iii.] p. 96.

peror, originally lord paramount of all these regions, as their liege lord and suzerain.

The Emperor Alexius, with trembling joy, beheld the crusaders approach a conclusion to which he had hoped to bribe them rather by interested means than by reasoning, although much might be said why provinces reconquered from the Turks or Saracens should, if recovered from the infidel, become again a part of the Grecian empire, from which they had been rent without any pretense save that of violence.

Though fearful, and almost despairing, of being able to manage the rude and discordant army of haughty chiefs, who were wholly independent of each other, Alexius failed not, with eagerness and dexterity, to seize upon the admission of Godfrey and his compeers, that the Emperor was entitled to the allegiance of all who should war on Palestine, and natural lord paramount of all the conquests which should be made in the course of the expedition. He was resolved to make this ceremony so public, and to interest men's minds in it by such a display of the imperial pomp and munificence, that it should not either pass unknown or be readily forgotten.

An extensive terrace, one of the numerous spaces which extend along the coast of the Propontis, was chosen for the site of the magnificent ceremony. Here was placed an elevated and august throne, calculated for the use of the Emperor alone. On this occasion, by suffering no other seats within view of the pageant, the Greeks endeavored to secure a point of ceremony peculiarly dear to their vanity, namely, that none of that presence, save the Emperor himself, should be seated. Around the throne of Alexius Comnenus were placed in order, but standing, the various dignitaries of his splendid court, in their different ranks, from the Protosebastos and the Cæsar to the Patriarch, splendid in his ecclesiastic robes, and to Agelastes, who, in his simple habit, gave also the necessary attendance. Behind and around the splendid display of the Emperor's court were drawn many dark circles of the exiled Anglo-Saxons. These, by their own desire, were not, on that memorable day, accoutered in the silver corslets which were the fashion of an idle court, but sheathed in mail and plate. They desired, they said, to be known as warriors to warriors. This was the more readily granted, as there was no knowing what trifle might infringe a truce between parties so inflammable as were now assembled.

Beyond the Varangians, in much greater numbers, were drawn up the bands of Grecians, or Romans, then known by the title of Immortals, which had been borrowed by the Romans originally from the empire of Persia. The stately forms, lofty crests, and splendid apparel of these guards would have given the foreign princes present a higher idea of their military prowess, had there not occurred in their ranks a frequent indication of loquacity and of motion, forming a strong contrast to the steady composure and death-like silence with which the well-trained Varangians stood in the parade, like statues made of iron.

The reader must then conceive this throne in all the pomp of Oriental greatness, surrounded by the foreign and Roman troops of the empire, and closed on the rear by clouds of light horse, who shifted their places repeatedly, so as to convey an idea of their multitude, without affording the exact means of estimating it. Through the dust which they raised by these evolutions might be seen banners and standards, among which could be discovered, by glances, the celebrated LABARUM,* the pledge of conquest to the imperial banners, but whose sacred efficacy had somewhat failed of late days. The rude soldiers of the West, who viewed the Grecian army, maintained that the standards which were exhibited in front of their line were at least sufficient for the array of ten times the number of soldiers.

Far on the right, the appearance of a very large body of European cavalry drawn up on the sea-shore intimated the presence of the crusaders. So great was the desire to follow the example of the chief princes, dukes, and counts, in making the proposed fealty, that the number of independent knights and nobles who were to perform this service seemed very great when collected together for that purpose; for every crusader who possessed a tower and led six lances would have thought himself abridged of his dignity if he had not been called to acknowledge the Grecian Emperor, and hold the lands he should conquer of his throne, as well as Godfrey of Bouillon, or Hugh the Great, Count of Vermandois. And yet, with strange inconsistency, though they pressed to fulfil the homage as that which was paid by greater persons than themselves, they seemed, at the very same time, desirous to find some mode of intimating that the homage which they rendered they felt as an idle degradation, and in fact held the whole show as a mere piece of mockery.

* See Note 6.

The order of the procession had been thus settled :—The crusaders, or, as the Grecians called them, the "counts"—that being the most common title among them—were to advance from the left of their body, and, passing the Emperor one by one, were apprised that, in passing, each was to render to him, in as few words as possible, the homage which had been previously agreed on. Godfrey of Bouillon, his brother Baldwin, Bohemond of Antioch, and several other crusaders of eminence, were the first to perform the ceremony, alighting when their own part was performed, and remaining in attendance by the Emperor's chair, to prevent, by the awe of their presence, any of their numerous associates from being guilty of petulance or presumption during the solemnity. Other crusaders of less degree retained their station near the Emperor, when they had once gained it, out of mere curiosity, or to show that they were as much at liberty to do so as the greater commanders who assumed that privilege.

Thus two great bodies of troops, Grecian and European, paused at some distance from each other on the banks of the Bosphorus canal, differing in language, arms, and appearance. The small troops of horse which from time to time issued forth from these bodies resembled the flashes of lightning passing from one thunder-cloud to another, which communicate to each other by such emissaries their overcharged contents. After some halt on the margin of the Bosphorus, the Franks who had performed homage straggled irregularly forward to a quay on the shore, where innumerable galleys and smaller vessels, provided for the purpose, lay with sails and oars prepared to waft the warlike pilgrims across the passage, and place them on that Asia which they longed so passionately to visit, and from which but few of them were likely to return. The gay appearance of the vessels which were to receive them, the readiness with which they were supplied with refreshments, the narrowness of the strait they had to cross, the near approach of that active service which they had vowed and longed to discharge, put the warriors into gay spirits, and songs and music bore chorus to the departing oars.

While such was the temper of the crusaders, the Grecian Emperor did his best through the whole ceremonial to impress on the armed multitude the highest ideas of his own grandeur, and the importance of the occasion which had brought them together. This was readily admitted by the higher chiefs—some because their vanity had been propiti-

ated, some because their avarice had been gratified, some because their ambition had been inflamed, and a few—a very few, because to remain friends with Alexius was the most probable means of advancing the purposes of their expedition. Accordingly, the great lords, from these various motives, practised a humility which perhaps they were far from feeling, and carefully abstained from all which might seem like irreverence at the solemn festival of the Grecians. But there were very many of a different temper.

Of the great number of counts, lords, and knights under whose variety of banners the crusaders were led to the walls of Constantinople, many were too insignificant to be bribed to this distasteful measure of homage; and these, though they felt it dangerous to oppose resistance, yet mixed their submission with taunts, ridicule, and such contraventions of decorum as plainly intimated that they entertained resentment and scorn at the step they were about to take, and esteemed it as proclaiming themselves vassals to a prince heretic in his faith, limited in the exercise of his boasted power, their enemy when he dared show himself such, and the friend of those only among their number who were able to compel him to be so, and who, though to them an obsequious ally, was to the others, when occasion offered, an insidious and murderous enemy.

The nobles of Frankish origin and descent were chiefly remarkable for their presumptuous contempt of every other nation engaged in the crusade, as well as for their dauntless bravery, and for the scorn with which they regarded the power and authority of the Greek empire. It was a common saying among them that, if the skies should fall, the French crusaders alone were able to hold them up with their lances. The same bold and arrogant disposition showed itself in occasional quarrels with their unwilling hosts, in which the Greeks, notwithstanding all their art, were often worsted; so that Alexius was determined, at all events, to get rid of these intractable and fiery allies, by ferrying them over the Bosphorus with all manner of diligence. To do this with safety, he availed himself of the presence of the Count of Vermandois, Godfrey of Bouillon, and other chiefs of great influence, to keep in order the lesser Frankish knights, who were so numerous and unruly.*

Struggling with his feelings of offended pride, tempered by a prudent degree of apprehension, the Emperor endeavored to receive with complacence a homage tendered in

* See Mills, vol. i. chap. iii.

mockery. An incident shortly took place of a character highly descriptive of the nations brought together in so extraordinary a manner, and with such different feelings and sentiments. Several bands of French had passed, in a sort of procession, the throne of the Emperor, and rendered, with some appearance of gravity, the usual homage. On this occasion they bent their knees to Alexius, placed their hands within his, and in that posture paid the ceremonies of feudal fealty. But when it came to the turn of Bohemond of Antioch, already mentioned, to render this fealty, the Emperor, desirous to show every species of honor to this wily person, his former enemy, and now apparently his ally, advanced two or three paces towards the seaside, where the boats lay as if in readiness for his use.

The distance to which the Emperor moved was very small, and it was assumed as a piece of deference to Bohemond; but it became the means of exposing Alexius himself to a cutting affront, which his guards and subjects felt deeply, as an intentional humiliation. A half-score of horsemen, attendants of the Frankish count who was next to perform the homage, with their lord at the head, set off at full gallop from the right flank of the French squadrons, and arriving before the throne, which was yet empty, they at once halted. The rider at the head of the band was a strong, herculean figure, with a decided and stern countenance, though extremely handsome, looking out from thick black curls. His head was surmounted with a barret cap, while his hands, limbs, and feet were covered with garments of chamois leather, over which he in general wore the ponderous and complete armor of his country. This, however, he had laid aside for personal convenience, though in doing so he evinced a total neglect of the ceremonial which marked so important a meeting. He waited not a moment for the Emperor's return, nor regarded the impropriety of obliging Alexius to hurry his steps back to his throne, but sprung from his gigantic horse, and threw the reins loose, which were instantly seized by one of the attendant pages. Without a moment's hesitation, the Frank seated himself in the vacant throne of the Emperor, and extending his half-armed and robust figure on the golden cushions which were destined for Alexius, he indolently began to caress a large wolf-hound which had followed him, and which, feeling itself as much at ease as its master, reposed its grim form on the carpets of silk and gold damask which tapestried the imperial footstool. The very hound stretched itself with a

bold, ferocious insolence, and seemed to regard no one with respect save the stern knight whom it called master.

The Emperor, turning back from the short space which, as a special mark of favor, he had accompanied Bohemond, beheld with astonishment his seat occupied by this insolent Frank. The bands of the half-savage Varangians who were stationed around would not have hesitated an instant in avenging the insult, by prostrating the violator of their master's throne even in this act of his contempt had they not been restrained by Achilles Tatius and other officers, who were uncertain what the Emperor would do, and somewhat timorous of taking a resolution for themselves.

Meanwhile, the unceremonious knight spoke aloud, in a speech which, though provincial, might be understood by all to whom the French language was known, while even those who understood it not gathered its interpretation from his tone and manner. "What churl is this," he said, "who has remained sitting stationary like a block of wood or the fragment of a rock, when so many noble knights, the flower of chivalry and muster of gallantry, stand uncovered around among the thrice conquered Varangians?"

A deep, clear accent replied, as if from the bottom of the earth, so like it was to the accents of some being from the other world—"If the Normans desire battle of the Varangians, they will meet them in the lists man to man, without the poor boast of insulting the Emperor of Greece, who is well known to fight only by the battle-axes of his guard."

The astonishment was so great when this answer was heard as to affect even the knight whose insult upon the Emperor had occasioned it; and amid the efforts of Achilles to retain his soldiers within the bounds of subordination and silence, a loud murmur seemed to intimate that they would not long remain so. Bohemond returned through the press with a celerity which did not so well suit the dignity of Alexius, and catching the crusader by the arm, he, something between fair means and a gentle degree of force, obliged him to leave the chair of the Emperor, in which he had placed himself so boldly.

"How is it," said Bohemond, "noble Count of Paris? Is there one of this great assembly who can see with patience that your name, so widely renowned for valor, is now to be quoted in an idle brawl with hirelings, whose utmost boast it is to bear a mercenary battle-ax in the ranks of the Emperor's guards? For shame—for shame; do not, for the discredit of Norman chivalry, let it be so!"

"I know not," said the crusader, rising reluctantly. "I am not nice in choosing the degree of my adversary, when he bears himself like one who is willing and forward in battle. I am good-natured, I tell thee, Count Bohemond; and Turk or Tartar, or wandering Anglo-Saxon, who only escapes from the chain of the Normans to become the slave of the Greek, is equally welcome to whet his blade clean against my armor, if he desires to achieve such an honorable office."

The Emperor had heard what passed—had heard it with indignation, mixed with fear; for he imagined the whole scheme of his policy was about to be overturned at once by a premeditated plan of personal affront, and probably an assault upon his person. He was about to call to arms, when, casting his eyes on the right flank of the crusaders, he saw that all remained quiet after the Frank baron had transferred himself from thence. He therefore instantly resolved to let the insult pass, as one of the rough pleasantries of the Franks, since the advance of more troops did not give any symptom of an actual onset.

Resolving on his line of conduct with the quickness of thought, he glided back to his canopy and stood beside his throne, of which, however, he chose not instantly to take possession, lest he should give the insolent stranger some ground for renewing and persisting in a competition for it.

"What bold vavasour is this," said he to Count Baldwin, "whom, as is apparent from his dignity, I ought to have received seated upon my throne, and who thinks proper thus to vindicate his rank?"

"He is reckoned one of the bravest men in our host," answered Baldwin, "though the brave are as numerous there as the sands of the sea. He will himself tell you his name and rank."

Alexius looked at the vavasour. He saw nothing in his large, well-formed-features, lighted by a wild touch of enthusiasm which spoke in his quick eye, that intimated premeditated insult, and was induced to suppose that what had occurred, so contrary to the form and ceremonial of the Grecian court, was neither an intentional affront nor designed as the means of introducing a quarrel. He therefore spoke with comparative ease when he addressed the stranger thus—"We know not by what dignified name to salute you; but we are aware, from Count Baldwin's information, that we are honored in having in our presence one of the bravest knights whom a sense of the wrongs done to the Holy Land

has brought thus far on his way to Palestine, to free it from its bondage."

"If you mean to ask my name," answered the European knight, "any one of these pilgrims can readily satisfy you, and more gracefully than I can myself, since we used to say in our country that many a fierce quarrel is prevented from being fought out by an untimely disclosure of names, when men, who might have fought with the fear of God before their eyes, must, when their names are manifested, recognize each other as spiritual allies, by baptism, gossipred, or some such irresistible bond of friendship; whereas, had they fought first, and told their names afterwards, they could have had some assurance of each other's valor, and have been able to view their relationship as an honor to both."

"Still," said the Emperor, "methinks I would know if you, who, in this extraordinary press of knights, seem to assert a precedence to yourself, claim the dignity due to a king or prince?"

"How speak you that?" said the Frank, with a brow somewhat overclouded; "do you feel that I have not left you unjostled by my advance to these squadrons of yours?"

Alexius hastened to answer, that he felt no particular desire to connect the count with an affront or offense; observing that, in the extreme necessity of the empire, it was no time for him, who was at the helm, to engage in idle or unnecessary quarrels.

The Frankish knight heard him, and answered drily—"Since such are your sentiments, I wonder that you have ever resided long enough within the hearing of the French language to learn to speak it as you do. I would have thought some of the sentiments of the chivalry of the nation, since you are neither a monk nor a woman, would, at the same time with the words of the dialect, have found their way into your heart."

"Hush, sir count," said Bohemond, who remained by the Emperor to avert the threatening quarrel. "It is surely requisite to answer the Emperor with civility; and those who are impatient for warfare will have infidels enough to wage it with. He only demanded your name and lineage, which you of all men can have least objection to disclose."

"I know not if it will interest this prince, or emperor, as you term him," answered the Frank count; "but all the account I can give of myself is this: In the midst of one of the vast forests which occupy the center of France, my native country, there stands a chapel, sunk so low into the

ground that it seems as if it were become decrepid by its own great age. The image of the Holy Virgin who presides over its altar is called by all men Our Lady of the Broken Lances, and is accounted through the whole kingdom the most celebrated for military adventures. Four beaten roads, each leading from an opposite point in the compass, meet before the principal door of the chapel; and ever and anon, as a good knight arrives at this place, he passes in to the performance of his devotions in the chapel, having first sounded his horn three times, till ash and oak-tree quiver and ring. Having then kneeled down to his devotions, he seldom arises from the mass of Her of the Broken Lances but there is attending on his leisure some adventurous knight ready to satisfy the new-comer's desire of battle. This station have I held for a month and more against all comers, and all gave me fair thanks for the knightly manner of quitting myself towards them, except one, who had the evil hap to fall from his horse, and did break his neck and another, who was struck through the body, so that the lance came out behind his back about a cloth-yard, all dripping with blood. Allowing for such accidents, which cannot easily be avoided, my opponents parted with me with fair acknowledgment of the grace I had done them."

"I conceive, sir knight," said the Emperor, "that a form like yours, animated by the courage you display, is likely to find few equals even among your adventurous countrymen; far less among men who are taught that to cast away their lives in a senseless quarrel among themselves is to throw away, like a boy, the gift of Providence."

"You are welcome to your opinion," said the Frank, somewhat contemptuously; "yet I assure you, if you doubt that our gallant strife was unmixed with sullenness and anger, and that we hunt not the hart or the boar with merrier hearts in the evening than we discharge our task of chivalry by the morn had arisen, before the portal of the old chapel, you do us foul injustice."

"With the Turks you will not enjoy this amiable exchange of courtesies," answered Alexius. "Wherefore I would advise you neither to stray far into the van nor into the rear, but to abide by the standard, where the best infidels make their efforts, and the best knights are required to repel them."

"By Our Lady of the Broken Lances," said the crusader, "I would not that the Turks were more courteous than they are Christian, and am well pleased that unbeliever and

heathen hound are a proper description for the best of them, as being traitor alike to their God and to the laws of chivalry; and devoutly do I trust that I shall meet with them in the front rank of our army, beside our standard, or elsewhere, and have an open field to do my devoir against them, both as the enemies of Our Lady and the holy saints and as, by their evil customs, more expressly my own. Meanwhile, you have time to seat yourself and receive my homage, and I will be bound to you for despatching this foolish ceremony with as little waste and delay of time as the occasion will permit."

The Emperor hastily seated himself, and received into his the sinewy hands of the crusader, who made the acknowledgment of his homage, and was then guided off by Count Baldwin, who walked with the stranger to the ships, and then, apparently well pleased at seeing him in the course of going on board, returned back to the side of the Emperor.

"What is the name," said the Emperor, "of that singular and assuming man?"

"It is Robert, Count of Paris," answered Baldwin, "accounted one of the bravest peers who stands around the throne of France."

After a moment's recollection, Alexius Comnenus issued orders that the ceremonial of the day should be discontinued, afraid, perhaps, lest the rough and careless humor of the strangers should produce some new quarrel. The crusaders were led, nothing loth, back to palaces in which they had already been hospitably received, and readily resumed the interrupted feast from which they had been called to pay their homage. The trumpets of the various leaders blew the recall of the few troops of an ordinary character who were attendant, together with the host of knights and leaders, who, pleased with the indulgences provided for them, and obscurely foreseeing that the passage of the Bosphorus would be the commencement of their actual suffering, rejoiced in being called to the hither side.

It was not probably intended, but the hero, as he might be styled, of the tumultuous day, Count Robert of Paris, who was already on his road to embarkation on the strait, was disturbed in his purpose by the sound of recall which was echoed around; nor could Bohemond, Godfrey, or any who took upon him to explain the signal, alter his resolution of returning to Constantinople. He laughed to scorn the threatened displeasure of the Emperor, and seemed to think there would be a peculiar pleasure in braving Alexius

at his own board, or, at least, that nothing could be more indifferent than whether he gave offense or not.

To Godfrey of Bouillon, to whom he showed some respect, he was still far from paying deference; and that sagacious prince, having used every argument which might shake his purpose of returning to the imperial city, to the very point of making it a quarrel with him in person, at length abandoned him to his own discretion, and pointed him out to the Count of Tholouse, as he passed, as a wild knight-errant, incapable of being influenced by anything save his own wayward fancy. "He brings not five hundred men to the crusade," said Godfrey; "and I dare be sworn, that even in this, the very outset of the undertaking, he knows not where these five hundred men are, and how their wants are provided for. There is an eternal trumpet in his ear sounding to assault, nor has he room or time to hear a milder or more rational signal. See how he strolls along yonder, the very emblem of an idle schoolboy, broke out of the school-bounds upon a holyday, half animated by curiosity and half by love of mischief."

"And," said Raymond, Count of Tholouse, "with resolution sufficient to support the desperate purpose of the whole army of devoted crusaders. And yet so passionate a Rodomont is Count Robert, that he would rather risk the success of the whole expedition than omit an opportunity of meeting a worthy antagonist *en champ clos*, or lose, as he terms it, a chance of worshiping Our Lady of the Broken Lances. Who are yon with whom he has now met, and who are apparently walking, or rather strolling, in the same way with him, back to Constantinople?"

"An armed knight, brilliantly equipped, yet of something less than knightly stature," answered Godfrey. "It is, I suppose, the celebrated lady who won Robert's heart in the lists of battle, by bravery and valor equal to his own; and the pilgrim form in the long vestments may be their daughter or niece."

"A singular spectacle, worthy knight," said the Count of Tholouse, "do our days present to us, to which we have had nothing similiar since Gaita,* wife of Robert Guiscard, first took upon her to distinguish herself by manly deeds of emprise, and rival her husband, as well in the front of battle as at the dancing-room or banquet."

"Such is the custom of this pair, most noble knight," answered another crusader, who had joined them, "and

* See Note 7.

Heaven pity the poor man who has no power to keep domestic peace by an appeal to the stronger hand!"

"Well," replied Raymond, "if it be rather a mortifying reflection that the lady of our love is far past the bloom of youth, it is a consolation that she is too old-fashioned to beat us, when we return back with no more of youth or manhood than a long crusade has left. But come, follow on the road to Constantinople, and in the rear of this most doughty knight."

CHAPTER X

These were wild times—the antipodes of ours:
Ladies were there, who oftener saw themselves
In the broad luster of a foeman's shield
Than in a mirror, and who rather sought
To match themselves in battle than in dalliance
To meet a lover's onset. But though Nature
Was outraged thus, she was not overcome.

Feudal Times.

BRENHILDA, Countess of Paris, was one of those stalwart dames who willingly hazarded themselves in the front of battle, which, during the first crusade, was as common as it was possible for a very unnatural custom to be, and in fact, gave the real instances of the Marphisas and Bradamantes, whom the writers of romance delighted to paint, assigning them sometimes the advantage of invulnerable armor, or a spear whose thrust did not admit of being resisted, in order to soften the improbability of the weaker sex being frequently victorious over the male part of the creation.

But the spell of Brenhilda was of a more simple nature, and rested chiefly in her great beauty.

From a girl, she despised the pursuits of her sex; and they who ventured to become suitors for the hand of the young Lady of Aspramonte, to which warlike fief she had succeeded, and which perhaps encouraged her in her fancy, received for answer, that they must first merit it by their good behavior in the lists. The father of Brenhilda was dead; her mother was of a gentle temper, and easily kept under management by the young lady herself.

Brenhilda's numerous suitors readily agreed to terms which were too much according to the manners of the age to be disputed. A tournament was held at the Castle of Aspramonte, in which one half of the gallant assembly rolled headlong before their successful rivals, and withdrew from the lists mortified and disappointed. The successful party among the suitors were expected to be summoned to joust among themselves. But they were surprised at being made acquainted with the lady's further will. She aspired to wear armor herself, to wield a lance, and back a steed, and prayed the knights that they would permit a lady,

whom they professed to honor so highly, to mingle in their games of chivalry. The young knights courteously received their young mistress in the lists, and smiled at the idea of her holding them triumphantly against so many gallant champions of the other sex. But the vassals and old servants of the count, her father, smiled to each other, and intimated a different result than the gallants anticipated. The knights who encountered the fair Brenhilda were one by one stretched on the sand ; nor was it to be denied that the situation of tilting with one of the handsomest women of the time was an extremely embarrassing one. Each youth was bent to withhold his charge in full volley, to cause his steed to swerve at the full shock, or in some other way to flinch from doing the utmost which was necessary to gain the victory, lest, in so gaining it, he might cause irreparable injury to the beautiful opponent he tilted with. But the Lady of Aspramonte was not one who could be conquered by less than the exertion of the whole strength and talents of the victor. The defeated suitors departed from the lists the more mortified at their discomfiture, because Robert of Paris arrived at sunset, and, understanding what was going forward, sent his name to the barriers, as that of a knight who would willingly forego the reward of the tournament, in case he had the fortune to gain it, declaring that neither lands nor ladies' charms were what he came thither to seek. Brenhilda, piqued and mortified, chose a new lance, mounted her best steed, and advanced into the lists as one determined to avenge upon the new assailant's brow the slight of her charms which he seemed to express. But whether her displeasure had somewhat interfered with her usual skill, or whether she had, like others of her sex, felt a partiality towards one whose heart was not particularlly set upon gaining hers, or whether, as is often said on such occasions, her fated hour was come, so it was that Count Robert tilted with his usual address and good fortune. Brenhilda of Aspramonte was unhorsed and unhelmed, and stretched on the earth, and the beautiful face, which faded from very red to deadly pale before the eyes of the victor, produced its natural effect in raising the value of his conquest. He would, in conformity with his resolution, have left the castle, after having mortified the vanity of the lady ; but her mother opportunely interposed, and, when she had satisfied herself that no serious injury had been sustained by the young heiress, she returned her thanks to the stranger knight who had taught her daughter a lesson,

which, she trusted, she would not easily forget. Thus tempted to do what he secretly wished, Count Robert gave ear to those sentiments which naturally whispered to him to be in no hurry to withdraw.

He was of the blood of Charlemagne, and, what was still of more consequence in the young lady's eyes, one of the most renowned of Norman knights in that jousting day. After a residence of ten days in the Castle of Aspramonte, the bride and bridegroom set out, for such was Count Robert's will, with a competent train, to Our Lady of the Broken Lances, where it pleased him to be wedded. Two knights, who were waiting to do battle, as was the custom of the place, were rather disappointed at the nature of the cavalcade, which seemed to interrupt their purpose. But greatly were they surprised when they received a cartel from the betrothed couple, offering to substitute their own persons in the room of other antagonists, and congratulating themselves in commencing their married life in a manner so consistent with that which they had hitherto led. They were victorious as usual; and the only persons having occasion to rue the complaisance of the Count and his bride were the two strangers, one of whom broke an arm in the rencontre and the other dislocated a collar-bone.

Count Robert's course of knight-errantry did not seem to be in the least intermitted by his marriage; on the contrary, when he was called upon to support his renown, his wife was often known also in military exploits, nor was she inferior to him in thirst after fame. They both assumed the cross at the same time, that being then the predominating folly in Europe.

The Countess Brenhilda was now above six-and-twenty years old, with as much beauty as can well fall to the share of an amazon. A figure of the largest feminine size was surmounted by a noble countenance, to which even repeated warlike toils had not given more than a sunny hue, relieved by the dazzling whiteness of such parts of her face as were not usually displayed.

As Alexius gave orders that his retinue should return to Constantinople, he spoke in private to the Follower, Achilles Tatius. The satrap answered with a submissive bend of the head, and separated with a few attendants from the main body of the Emperor's train. The principal road to the city was, of course, filled with the troops, and with the numerous crowds of spectators, all of whom were inconvenienced in some degree by the dust and heat of the weather.

Count Robert of Paris had embarked his horses on board of ship, and all his retinue, except an old squire or valet of his own and an attendant of his wife. He felt himself more incommoded in this crowd than he desired, especially as his wife shared it with him, and began to look among the scattered trees which fringed the shores down almost to the tide-mark, to see if he could discern any by-path which might carry them more circuitously, but more pleasantly, to the city, and afford them at the same time, what was their principal object in the East, strange sights or adventures of chivalry. A broad and beaten path seemed to promise them all the enjoyment which shade could give in a warm climate. The ground through which it wound its way was beautifully broken by the appearance of temples, churches, and kiosks, and here and there a fountain distributed its silver produce, like a benevolent individual, who, self-denying to himself, is liberal to all others who are in necessity. The distant sound of the martial music still regaled their way ; and, at the same time, as it detained the populace on the highroad, prevented the strangers from becoming incommoded with fellow-travelers.

Rejoicing in the abated heat of the day, wondering, at the same time, at the various kinds of architecture, the strange features of the landscape, or accidental touches of manners exhibited by those who met or passed them upon their journey, they strolled easily onwards. One figure particularly caught the attention of the Countess Brenhilda. This was an old man of great stature, engaged, apparently, so deeply with the roll of parchment which he held in his hand, that he paid no attention to the objects which were passing around him. Deep thought appeared to reign on his brow, and his eye was of that piercing kind which seems designed to search and winnow the frivolous from the edifying part of human discussion, and limit its inquiry to the last. Raising his eyes slowly from the parchment on which he had been gazing, the look of Agelastes—for it was the sage himself—encountered those of Count Robert and his lady, and addressing them with the kindly epithet of "my children," he asked if they had missed their road, or whether there was anything in which he could do them any pleasure.

"We are strangers, father," was the answer, "from a distant country, and belonging to the army which has passed hither upon pilgrimage ; one object brings us here in common, we hope, with all that host. We desire to pay our devotions where the great ransom was paid for us, and to

free, by our good swords, enslaved Palestine from the usurpation and tyranny of the infidel. When we have said this, we have announced our highest human motive. Yet Robert of Paris and his Countess would not willingly set their foot on a land save what should resound its echo. They have not been accustomed to move in silence upon the face of the earth, and they would purchase an eternal life of fame, though it were at the price of mortal existence."

"You seek, then, to barter safety for fame," said Agelastes, "though you may, perchance, throw death into the scale by which you hope to gain it?"

"Assuredly," said Count Robert; "nor is there one wearing such a belt as this to whom such a thought is stranger."

"And, as I understand," said Agelastes, "your lady shares with your honorable self in these valorous resolutions? Can this be?"

"You may undervalue my female courage, father, if such is your will," said the Countess; "but I speak in presence of a witness who can attest the truth when I say, that a man of half your years had not doubted the truth with impunity."

"Nay, Heaven protect me from the lightning of your eyes," said Agelastes, "whether in anger or in scorn. I bear an ægis about myself against what I should else have feared. But age, with its incapacities, brings also its apologies. Perhaps, indeed, it is one like me whom you seek to find, and in that case I should be happy to render to you such services as it is my duty to offer to all worthy knights."

"I have already said," replied Count Robert, "that, after the accomplishment of my vow"—he looked upwards and crossed himself—"there is nothing on earth to which I am more bound than to celebrate my name in arms as becomes a valiant cavalier. When men die obscurely, they die forever. Had my ancestor Charles never left the paltry banks of the Saale, he had not now been much better known than any vine-dresser who wielded his pruning-hook in the same territories. But he bore him like a brave man, and his name is deathless in the memory of the worthy."

"Young man," said the old Grecian, "although it is but seldom that such as you, whom I was made to serve and to value, visit this country, it is not the less true that I am well qualified to serve you in the matter which you have so much at heart. My acquaintance with nature has been so perfect and so long, that, during its continuance, she has disappeared, and another world has been spread before me,

in which she has but little to do. Thus the curious stores which I have assembled are beyond the researches of other men, and not to be laid before those whose deeds of valor are to be bounded by the ordinary probabilities of every-day nature. No romancer of your romantic country ever devised such extraordinary adventures out of his own imagination, and to feed the idle wonder of those who sat listening around, as those which I know, not of idle invention, but of real positive existence, with the means of achieving and accomplishing the conditions of each adventure."

"If such be your real profession," said the French Count, "you have met one of those whom you chiefly search for; nor will my Countess and I stir farther upon our road until you have pointed out to us some one of those adventures which it is the business of errant-knights to be industrious in seeking out."

So saying, he sat down by the side of the old man; and his lady, with a degree of reverence which had something in it almost diverting, followed his example.

"We have fallen right, Brenhilda," said Count Robert; "our guardian angel has watched his charge carefully. Here have we come among an ignorant set of pedants, chattering their absurd language, and holding more important the least look that a cowardly emperor can give than the best blow that a good knight can deal. Believe me, I was well-nigh thinking that we had done ill to take the cross—God forgive such an impious doubt! Yet here, when we were even despairing to find the road to fame, we have met with one of those excellent men whom the knights of yore were wont to find sitting by springs, by crosses, and by altars, ready to direct the wandering knight where fame was to be found. Disturb him not, my Brenhilda," said the Count, "but let him recall to himself his stories of the ancient time, and thou shalt see he will enrich us with the treasures of his information."

"If," replied Agelastes, after some pause, "I have waited for a longer term than human life is granted to most men, I shall still be overpaid by dedicating what remains of existence to the service of a pair so devoted to chivalry. What first occurs to me is a story of our Greek country, so famous in adventures, and which I shall briefly detail to you:—

"Afar hence, in our renowned Grecian Archipelago, amid storms and whirlpools, rocks which, changing their character, appear to precipitate themselves against each other, and billows that are never in a pacific state, lies the rich island

of Zulichium, inhabited, notwithstanding its wealth, by a very few natives, who live only upon the sea-coast. The inland part of the island is one immense mountain, or pile of mountains, amongst which, those who dare approach near enough may, we are assured, discern the moss-grown and antiquated towers and pinnacles of a stately but ruinous castle, the habitation of the sovereign of the island, in which she has been enchanted for a great many years.

"A bold knight, who came upon a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, made a vow to deliver this unhappy victim of pain and sorcery, feeling, with justice, vehemently offended that the fiends of darkness should exercise any authority near the Holy Land, which might be termed the very fountain of light. Two of the oldest inhabitants of the island undertook to guide him as near to the main gate as they durst, nor did they approach it more closely than the length of a bow-shot. Here, then, abandoned to himself, the brave Frank set forth upon his enterprise, with a stout heart, and Heaven alone to friend. The fabric which he approached showed, by its gigantic size and splendor of outline, the power and wealth of the potentate who had erected it. The brazen gates unfolded themselves as if with hope and pleasure; and ærial voices swept around the spires and turrets, congratulating the genius of the place, it might be, upon the expected approach of its deliverer.

"The knight passed on, not unmoved with wonder, though untainted by fear; and the Gothic splendors which he saw were of a kind highly to exalt his idea of the beauty of the mistress for whom a prison-house had been so richly decorated. Guards there were in Eastern dress and arms, upon bulwark and buttress, in readiness, it appeared, to bend their bows; but the warriors were motionless and silent, and took no more notice of the armed step of the knight than if a monk or hermit had approached their guarded post. They were living, and yet, as to all power and sense, they might be considered among the dead. If there was truth in the old tradition, the sun had shone and the rain had fallen upon them for more than four hundred changing seasons, without their being sensible of the genial warmth of the one or the coldness of the other. Like the Israelites in the desert, their shoes had not decayed, nor their vestments waxed old. As Time left them, so and without alteration was he again to find them." The philosopher began now to recall what he had heard of the cause of their enchantment.

"The sage to whom this potent charm is imputed was one

of the Magi who followed the tenets of Zoroaster. He had come to the court of this youthful princess, who received him with every attention which gratified vanity could dictate, so that in a short time her awe of this grave personage was lost in the sense of ascendency which her beauty gave her over him. It was no difficult matter—in fact it happens every day—for the beautiful woman to lull the wise man into what is not unaptly called a fool's paradise. The sage was induced to attempt feats of youth which his years rendered ridiculous : he could command the elements, but the common course of nature was beyond his power. When, therefore, he exerted his magic strength, the mountains bent and the seas receded ; but when the philosopher attempted to lead forth the Princess of Zulichium in the youthful dance, youths and maidens turned their heads aside lest they should make too manifest the ludicrous ideas with which they were impressed.

"Unhappily, as the aged, even the wisest of them, will forget themselves, so the young naturally enter into an alliance to spy out, ridicule, and enjoy their foibles. Many were the glances which the Princess sent among her retinue, intimating the nature of the amusement which she received from the attentions of her formidable lover. In process of time, she lost her caution, and a glance was detected, expressing to the old man the ridicule and contempt in which he had been all along held by the object of his affections. Earth has no passion so bitter as love converted to hatred ; and while the sage bitterly regretted what he had done, he did not the less resent the light-hearted folly of the Princess by whom he had been duped.

"If, however, he was angry, he possessed the art to conceal it. Not a word, not a look expressed the bitter disappointment which he had received. A shade of melancholy, or rather gloom, upon his brow alone intimated the coming storm. The Princess became somewhat alarmed ; she was, besides, extremely good-natured, nor had her intentions of leading the old man into what would render him ridiculous been so accurately planned with malice prepense as they were the effect of accident and chance. She saw the pain which he suffered, and thought to end it by going up to him, when about to retire, and kindly wishing him good-night.

"'You say well, daughter,' said the sage, 'good night ; but who, of the numbers who hear me, shall say good morning ?'

"The speech drew little attention, although two or three persons to whom the character of the sage was known fled

from the island that very night, and by their report made known the circumstances attending the first infliction of this extraordinary spell on those who remained within the castle. A sleep like that of death fell upon them, and was not removed. Most of the inhabitants left the island; the few who remained were cautious how they approached the castle, and watched until some bold adventurer should bring that happy awakening which the speech of the sorcerer seemed in some degree to intimate.

"Never seemed there a fairer opportunity for that awakening to take place than when the proud step of Artavan de Hautlieu was placed upon those enchanted courts. On the left lay the palace and the donjon keep; but the right, more attractive, seemed to invite to the apartment of the women. At a side door reclined on a couch two guards of the harem, with their naked swords grasped in their hands, and features fiendishly contorted between sleep and dissolution seemed to menace death to any who should venture to approach. This threat deterred not Artavan de Hautlieu. He approached the entrance, when the doors, like those of the great entrance to the castle, made themselves instantly accessible to him. A guard-room of the same effeminate soldiers received him, nor could the strictest examination have discovered to him whether it was sleep or death which arrested the eyes that seemed to look upon and prohibit his advance. Unheeding the presence of these ghostly sentinels, Artavan pressed forward into an inner apartment, where female slaves of the most distinguished beauty were visible in the attitude of those who had already assumed their dress for the night. There was much in this scene which might have arrested so young a pilgrim as Artavan of Hautlieu; but his heart was fixed upon achieving the freedom of the beautiful Princess, nor did he suffer himself to be withdrawn from that object by any inferior consideration. He passed on, therefore, to a little ivory door, which, after a moment's pause, as if in maidenly hesitation, gave way like the rest, and yielded access to the sleeping apartment of the Princess herself. A soft light, resembling that of evening, penetrated into a chamber where everything seemed contrived to exalt the luxury of slumber. The heaps of cushions which formed a stately bed seemed rather to be touched than impressed by the form of a nymph of fifteen, the renowned Princess of Zulichium."

"Without interrupting you, good father," said the Countess Brenhilda, "it seems to me that we can comprehend

the picture of a woman asleep without much dilating upon it, and that such a subject is little recommended either by our age or by yours."

"Pardon me, noble lady," answered Agelastes, "the most approved part of my story has ever been this passage, and while I now suppress it in obedience to your command, bear notice, I pray you, that I sacrifice the most beautiful part of the tale."

"Brenhilda," added the Count, "I am surprised you think of interrupting a story which has hitherto proceeded with so much fire: the telling of a few words more or less will surely have a much greater influence upon the sense of the narrative than such an addition can possibly possess over our sentiments of action."

"As you will," said his lady, throwing herself carelessly back upon the seat; "but methinks the worthy father protracts this discourse till it becomes of a nature more trifling than interesting."

"Brenhilda," said the Count, "this is the first time I have remarked in you a woman's weakness."

"I may as well say, Count Robert, that it is the first time," answered Brenhilda, "that you have shown to me the inconstancy of your sex."

"Gods and goddesses," said the philosopher, "was ever known a quarrel more absurdly founded! The Countess is jealous of one whom her husband probably never will see, nor is there any prospect that the Princess of Zulichium will be hereafter better known to the modern world than if the curtain hung before her tomb."

"Proceed," said Count Robert of Paris; "if Sir Artavan of Hautlieu has not accomplished the enfranchisement of the Princess of Zulichium, I make a vow to Our Lady of the Broken Lances——"

"Remember," said his lady, interfering, "that you are already under a vow to free the Sepulcher of God; and to that, methinks, all lighter engagements might give place."

"Well, lady—well," said Count Robert, but half satisfied with this interference, "I will not engage myself, you may be assured, on any adventure which may claim precedence of the enterprise of the Holy Sepulcher, to which we are all bound."

"Alas!" said Agelastes, "the distance of Zulichium from the speediest route to the sepulcher is so small, that——"

"Worthy father," said the Countess, "we will, if it pleases you, hear your tale to an end, and then determine what we

will do. We Norman ladies, descendants of the old Germans, claim a voice with our lords in the council which precedes the battle, nor has our assistance in the conflict been deemed altogether useless."

The tone in which this was spoken conveyed an awkward innuendo to the philosopher, who began to foresee that the guidance of the Norman knight would be more difficult than he had foreseen, while his consort remained by his side. He took up, therefore, his oratory on somewhat a lower key than before, and avoided those warm descriptions which had given such offense to the Countess Brenhilda.

"Sir Artavan de Hautlieu, says the story, considered in what way he should accost the sleeping damsel, when it occurred to him in what manner the charm would be most likely to be reversed. I am in your judgment, fair lady, if he judged wrong in resolving that the method of his address should be a kiss upon the lips."

The color of Brenhilda was somewhat heightened, but she did not deem the observation worthy of notice.

"Never had so innocent an action," continued the philosopher, "an effect more horrible. The delightful light of a summer evening was instantly changed into a strange lurid hue, which, infected with sulphur, seemed to breathe suffocation through the apartment. The rich hangings and splendid furniture of the chamber, the very walls themselves, were changed into huge stones tossed together at random, like the inside of a wild beast's den; nor was the den without an inhabitant. The beautiful and innocent lips to which Artavan de Hautlieu had approached his own were now changed into the hideous and bizarre form and bestial aspect of a fiery dragon. A moment she hovered upon the wing, and it is said, had Sir Artavan found courage to repeat his salute three times, he would then have remained master of all the wealth and of the disenchanted Princess. But the opportunity was lost, and the dragon, or the creature who seemed such, sailed out at a side window upon its broad pennons, uttering loud wails of disappointment."

Here ended the story of Agelastes. "The Princess," he said, "is still supposed to abide her doom in the Island of Zulichium, and several knights have undertaken the adventure; but I know not whether it was the fear of saluting the sleeping maiden, or that of approaching the dragon into which she was transformed, but so it is, the spell remains unachieved. I know the way, and if you say the word, you may be to-morrow on the road to the castle of enchantment."

The Countess heard this proposal with the deepest anxiety, for she knew that she might, by opposition, determine her husband irrevocably upon following out the enterprise. She stood therefore with a timid and bashful look, strange in a person whose bearing was generally so dauntless, and prudently left it to the uninfluenced mind of Count Robert to form the resolution which should best please him.

"Brenhilda," he said, taking her hand, "fame and honor are dear to thy husband as ever they were to knight who buckled a brand upon his side. Thou hast done, perhaps, I may say, for me what I might in vain have looked for from ladies of thy condition; and therefore thou mayest well expect a casting voice in such points of deliberation. Why dost thou wander by the side of a foreign and unhealthy shore, instead of the banks of the lovely Seine? Why dost thou wear a dress unusual to thy sex? Why dost thou seek death, and think it little, in comparison of shame? Why? but that the Count of Paris may have a bride worthy of him. Dost thou think that this affection is thrown away? No, by the saints! Thy knight repays it as he best ought, and sacrifices to thee every thought which thy affection may less than entirely approve."

Poor Brenhilda, confused as she was by the various emotions with which she was agitated, now in vain endeavored to maintain the heroic deportment which her character as an amazon required from her. She attempted to assume the proud and lofty look which was properly her own, but, failing in the effort, she threw herself into the Count's arms, hung round his neck, and wept like a village maiden whose true love is pressed for the wars. Her husband, a little ashamed, while he was much moved, by this burst of affection in one to whose character it seemed an unusual attribute, was, at the same time, pleased and proud that he could have awakened an affection so genuine and so gentle in a soul so high-spirited and so unbending.

"Not thus," he said, "my Brenhilda! I would not have it thus, either for thine own sake or for mine. Do not let this wise old man suppose that thy heart is made of the malleable stuff which forms that of other maidens; and apologize to him, as may well become thee, for having prevented my undertaking the adventure of Zulichium, which he recommends."

It was not easy for Brenhilda to recover herself, after having afforded so notable an instance how nature can vindicate her rights, with whatever rigor she may have been

disciplined and tyrannized over. With a look of ineffable affection, she disjoined herself from her husband, still keeping hold of his hand, and turning to the old man with a countenance in which the half-effaced tears were succeeded by smiles of pleasure and of modesty, she spoke to Agelastes as she would to a person whom she respected, and towards whom she had some offense to atone. "Father," she said, respectfully, "be not angry with me that I should have been an obstacle to one of the best knights that ever spurred steed undertaking the enterprise of thine enchanted Princess; but the truth is that, in our land, where knighthood and religion agree in permitting only one lady love, and one lady wife, we do not quite so willingly see our husbands run into danger, especially of that kind where lonely ladies are the parties relieved—and—and kisses are the ransom paid. I have as much confidence in my Robert's fidelity as a lady can have in a loving knight, but still——"

"Lovely lady," said Agelastes, who, notwithstanding his highly artificial character, could not help being moved by the simple and sincere affection of the handsome young pair, "you have done no evil. The state of the Princess is no worse than it was, and there cannot be a doubt that the knight fated to relieve her will appear at the destined period."

The Countess smiled sadly, and shook her head. "You do not know," she said, "how powerful is the aid of which I have unhappily deprived this unfortunate lady, by a jealousy which I now feel to have been alike paltry and unworthy; and, such is my regret, that I could find in my heart to retract my opposition to Count Robert's undertaking this adventure." She looked at her husband with some anxiety, as one that had made an offer she would not willingly see accepted, and did not recover her courage until he said decidedly, "Brenhilda, that may not be."

"And why, then, may not Brenhilda herself take the adventure," continued the Countess, "since she can neither fear the charms of the Princess nor the terrors of the dragon."

"Lady," said Agelastes, "The Princess must be awakened by the kiss of love, and not by that of friendship."

"A sufficient reason," said the Countess, smiling, "why a lady may not wish her lord to go forth upon an adventure of which the conditions are so regulated."

"Noble minstrel, or herald, or by whatever name this country calls you," said Count Robert, "accept a small remuneration for an hour pleasantly spent, though spent,

unhappily, in vain. I should make some apology for the meanness of my offering, but French knights, you may have occasion to know, are more full of fame than of wealth."

"Not for that, noble sir," replied Agelastes, "would I refuse your munificence: a besant from your worthy hand or that of your noble-minded lady were centupled in its value by the eminence of the persons from whom it came. I would hang it round my neck by a string of pearls, and when I came into the presence of knights and of ladies I would proclaim that this addition to my achievement of armorial distinction was bestowed by the renowned Count Robert of Paris and his unequaled lady." The knight and the countess looked on each other, and the lady, taking from her finger a ring of pure gold, prayed the old man to accept of it as a mark of her esteem and her husband's. "With one other condition," said the philosopher, "which I trust you will not find altogether unsatisfactory. I have, on the way to the city by the most pleasant road, a small kiosk, or hermitage, where I sometimes receive my friends, who, I venture to say, are among the most respectable personages of this empire. Two or three of these will probably honor my residence to-day, and partake of the provision it affords. Could I add to these the company of the noble Count and Countess of Paris, I should deem my poor habitation honored forever."

"How say you, my noble wife?" said the Count. "The company of a minstrel befits the highest birth, honors the highest rank, and adds to the greatest achievements; and the invitation does us too much credit to be rejected."

"It grows somewhat late," said the Countess; "but we came not here to shun a sinking sun or a darkening sky, and I feel it my duty, as well as my satisfaction, to place at the command of the good father every pleasure which it is in my power to offer to him, for having been the means of your neglecting his advice."

"The path is so short," said Agelastes, "that we had better keep our present mode of traveling, if the lady should not want the assistance of horses."

"No horses on my account," said the Lady Brenhilda. "My waiting-woman, Agatha, has what necessaries I may require; and, for the rest, no knight ever traveled so little embarrassed with baggage as my husband."

Agelastes, therefore, led the way through the deepening wood, which was freshened by the cooler breath of evening, and his guests accompanied him.

CHAPTER XI

Without, a ruin, broken, tangled, cumbrous,
Within, it was a little paradise,
Where taste had made her dwelling. Statuary,
First-born of human art, molded her images,
And bade men mark and worship.

Anonymous.

THE Count of Paris and his lady attended the old man, whose advanced age, his excellence in the use of the French language, which he spoke to admiration—above all his skill in applying it to poetical and romantic subjects, which was essential to what was then termed history and *belles-lettres*—drew from the noble hearers a degree of applause which, as Agelastes had seldom been vain enough to consider as his due, so, on the part of the Knight of Paris and his lady, had it been but rarely conferred.

They had walked for some time by a path which sometimes seemed to hide itself among the woods that came down to the shore of the Propontis, sometimes emerged from concealment, and skirted the open margin of the strait, while at every turn it seemed guided by the desire to select a choice and contrast of beauty. Variety of scenes and manners enlivened, from their novelty, the landscape to the pilgrims. By the sea-shore, nymphs were seen dancing and shepherds piping, or beating the tambourine to their steps, as represented in some groups of ancient statuary. The very faces had a singular resemblance to the antique. If old, their long robes, their attitudes, and magnificent heads, presented the ideas which distinguish prophets and saints ; while on the other hand, the features of the young recalled the expressive countenances of the heroes of antiquity, and the charms of those lovely females by whom their deeds were inspired.

But the race of the Greeks was no longer to be seen, even in its native country, unmixed, or in absolute purity ; on the contrary, they saw groups of persons with features which argued a different descent.

In a retiring bosom of the shore, which was traversed by the path, the rocks, receding from the beach, rounded off a spacious portion of level sand, and, in some degree, enclosed

it. A party of heathen Scythians whom they beheld, presented the deformed features of the demons they were said to worship—flat noses with expanded nostrils, which seemed to admit the sight to their very brain; faces which extended rather in breadth than length, with strange unintellectual eyes placed in the extremity; figures short and dwarfish, yet garnished with legs and arms of astonishing sinewy strength, disproportioned to their bodies. As the travelers passed, the savages held a species of tournament, as the Count termed it. In this they exercised themselves by darting at each other long reeds, or canes, balanced for the purpose, which in this rude sport, they threw with such force as not unfrequently to strike each other from their steeds, and otherwise to cause serious damage. Some of the combatants being, for the time, out of the play, devoured with greedy looks the beauty of the Countess, and eyed her in such a manner that she said to Count Robert—"I have never known fear, my husband, nor is it for me to acknowledge it now; but if disgust be an ingredient of it, these misformed brutes are qualified to inspire it."

"What, ho, sir knight!" exclaimed one of the infidels, "Your wife, or your lady-love, has committed a fault against the privileges of the imperial Scythians, and not small will be the penalty she has incurred. You may go your way as fast as you will out of this place, which is, for the present, our hippodrome or atmeidan, call it which you will, as you prize the Roman or the Saracen language; but for your wife, if the sacrament has united you, believe my word, that she parts not so soon nor so easy."

"Scoundrel heathen," said the Christian knight, "dost thou hold that language to a peer of France?"

Agelastes here interposed, and, using the sounding language of a Grecian courtier, reminded the Scythian (mercenary soldiers, as they seemed, of the empire) that all violence against the European pilgrims was, by the imperial orders, strictly prohibited under pain of death.

"I know better," said the exulting savage, shaking one or two javelins with broad steel heads and wings of the eagle's feather, which last were dabbled in blood. "Ask the wings of my javelin," he said, "in whose heart's blood these feathers have been dyed. They shall reply to you that, if Alexius Comnenus be the friend of the European pilgrims, it is only while he looks upon them; and we are too exemplary soldiers to serve our emperor otherwise than he wishes to be served."

"Peace Toxartis," said the philosopher, "thou beliest thine emperor."

"Peace thou!" said Toxartis, "or I will do a deed that misbecomes a soldier, and rid the world of a prating old man."

So saying he put forth his hand to take hold of the Countess's veil. With the readiness which frequent use had given to the warlike lady, she withdrew herself from the heathen's grasp, and with her trenchant sword dealt him so sufficient a blow, that Toxartis leaf lifeless on the plain. The Count leaped on the fallen leader's steed, and crying his war-cry, "Son of Charlemagne to the rescue!" he rode amid the rout of heathen cavaliers with a battle-ax, which he found at the saddle-bow of the deceased chieftain, and wielding it with remorseless dexterity, he soon slew or wounded, or compelled to flight, the objects of his resentment; nor were there any of them who abode an instant to support the boast which they had made.

"The despicable churls!" said the Countess to Agelastes; "It irks me that a drop of such coward blood should stain the hands of a noble knight. They call their exercise a tournament, although in their whole exertions every blow is aimed behind the back, and not one has the courage to throw his windlestraw, while he perceives that of another pointed against himself."

"Such is their custom," said Agelastes; "not perhaps so much from cowardice as from habit, in exercising before his Imperial Majesty. I have seen that Toxartis literally turn his back upon the mark when he bent his bow in full career, and when in the act of galloping the farthest from his object, he pierced it through the very center with a broad arrow."

"A force of such soldiers," said Count Robert, who had now rejoined his friends, "could not, methinks, be very formidable where there was but an ounce of genuine courage in the assailants."

"Meantime, let us pass on to my kiosk," said Agelastes, "lest the fugitives find friends to encourage them in thoughts of revenge."

"Such friends," said Count Robert, "methinks the insolent heathens ought not to find in any land which calls itself Christian; and if I survive the conquest of the Holy Sepulcher, I shall make it my first business to inquire by what right your emperor retains in his service a band of paynim and unmannerly cut-throats, who dare offer injury upon the highway, which ought to be sacred to the peace of God and the king, and to noble ladies and inoffensive pilgrims. It is

one of a list of many questions which, my vow accomplished, I will not fail to put to him—ay, and expecting an answer as they say, prompt and categorical."

"You shall gain no answer from me, though," said Agelastes to himself. "Your demands, sir knight, are over-peremptory, and imposed under too rigid conditions, to be replied to by those who can evade them."

He changed the conversation, accordingly, with easy dexterity; and they had not proceeded much farther before they reached a spot, the natural beauties of which called forth the admiration of his foreign companions. A copious brook, gushing out of the woodland, descended to the sea with no small noise and tumult; and, as if disdaining a quieter course, which it might have gained by a little circuit to the right, it took the readiest road to the ocean, plunging over the face of a lofty and barren precipice which overhung the seashore, and from thence led its little tribute, with as much noise as if it had the stream of a full river to boast of, to the waters of the Hellespont.

The rock, we have said, was bare, unless in so far as it was clothed with the foaming waters of the cataract; but the banks on each side were covered with plane-trees, walnut-trees, cypresses, and other kinds of large timber proper to the East. The fall of water, always agreeable in a warm climate, and generally produced by artificial means, was here natural, and had been chosen, something like the Sibyl's temple at Tivoli, for the seat of a goddess to whom the invention of polytheism had assigned a sovereignty over the department around. The shrine was small and circular, like many of the lesser temples of the rustic deities, and inclosed by the wall of an outer court. After its desecration it had probably been converted into a luxurious summer retreat by Agelastes, or some Epicurean philosopher. As the building, itself of a light, airy and fantastic character, was dimly seen through the branches and foliage on the edge of the rock, so the mode by which it was accessible was not at first apparent amongst the mist of the cascade. A pathway, a good deal hidden by vegetation, ascended by a gentle acclivity, and, prolonged by the architect by means of a few broad and easy marble steps, making part of the original approach, conducted the passenger to a small, but exquisitely lovely, velvet lawn in front of the turret or temple we have described, the back part of which building overhung the cataract.

CHAPTER XII

The parties met. The wily, wordy Greek,
Weighing each word, and canvassing each syllable,
Evading, arguing, equivocating;
And the stern Frank came with his two-hand sword,
Watching to see which way the balance sways,
That he may throw it in, and turn the scales.

Palestine.

At a signal made by Agelastes, the door of this romantic retreat was opened by Diogenes, the negro slave, to whom our readers have been already introduced; nor did it escape the wily old man that the Count and his lady testified some wonder at his form and lineaments, being the first African perhaps whom they had ever seen so closely. The philosopher lost not the opportunity of making an impression on their minds by a display of the superiority of his knowledge.

"This poor being," he observed, "is of the race of Ham, the undutiful son of Noah; for his transgressions against his parent, he was banished to the sands of Africa, and was condemned to be the father of a race doomed to be the slaves of the issue of his more dutiful brethren."

The knight and his lady gazed on the wonderful appearance before them, and did not, it may be believed, think of doubting the information, which was so much of a piece with their prejudices, while their opinion of their host was greatly augmented by the supposed extent of his knowledge.

"It gives pleasure to a man of humanity," continued Agelastes, "when, in old age or sickness, we must employ the services of others, which is at other times scarce lawful, to choose his assistants out of a race of beings, hewers of wood and drawers of water, from their birth upwards destined to slavery; and to whom, therefore, by employing them as slaves, we render no injury, but carry into effect, in a slight degree, the intentions of the Great Being who made us all."

"Are there many of a race," said the Countess, "so singularly unhappy in their destination? I have hitherto thought the stories of black men as idle as those which minstrels tell of fairies and ghosts."

"Do not believe so," said the philosopher; "the race is numerous as the sands of the sea, neither are they altogether unhappy in discharging the duties which their fate has allotted them. Those who are of worse character suffer even in this life the penance due to their guilt: they become the slaves of the cruel and tyrannical, are beaten, starved, and mutilated. To those whose moral characters are better, better masters are provided, who share with their slaves as with their children, food and raiment, and the other good things which they themselves enjoy. To some Heaven allots the favor of kings and of conquerors, and to a few, but those the chief favorites of the species, hath been assigned a place in the mansions of philosophy, where, by availing themselves of the lights which their masters can afford, they gain a prospect into that world which is the residence of true happiness."

"Methinks I understand you," replied the Countess, "and if so, I ought rather to envy our sable friend here than to pity him for having been allotted in the partition of his kind to the possession of his present master, from whom, doubtless, he has acquired the desirable knowledge which you mention."

"He learns, at least," said Agelastes, modestly, "what I can teach, and, above all, to be contented with his situation. Diogenes, my good child," said he, changing his address to the slave, "thou seest I have company—what does the poor hermit's larder afford, with which he may regale his honored guests?"

Hitherto they had advanced no farther than a sort of outer room, or hall of entrance, fitted up with no more expense than might have suited one who desired at some outlay, and more taste, to avail himself of the ancient building for a sequestered and private retirement. The chairs and couches were covered with Eastern woven mats, and were of the simplest and most primitive form. But on touching a spring, an interior apartment was displayed, which had considerable pretension to splendor and magnificence.

The furniture and hangings of this apartment were of straw-colored silk, wrought on the looms of Persia, and crossed with embroidery, which produced a rich yet simple effect. The ceiling was carved in arabesque, and the four corners of the apartment were formed into recesses for statuary, which had been produced in a better age of the art than that which existed at the period of our story. In one nook a shepherd seemed to withdraw himself, as if ashamed

to produce his scantily-covered person, while he was willing to afford the audience the music of the reed which he held in his hand. Three damsels, resembling the Graces in the beautiful proportions of their limbs, and the slender clothing which they wore, lurked in different attitudes, each in her own niche, and seemed but to await the first sound of the music to bound forth from thence and join in the frolic dance. The subject was beautiful, yet somewhat light, to ornament the study of such a sage as Agelastes represented himself to be.

He seemed to be sensible that this might attract observation. "These figures," he said, "executed at the period of the highest excellence of Grecian art, were considered of old as the choral nymphs assembled to adore the goddess of the place, waiting but the music to join in the worship of the temple. And, in truth, the wisest may be interested in seeing how near to animation the genius of these wonderful men could bring the inflexible marble. Allow but for the absence of the divine afflatus, or breath of animation, and an unenlightened heathen might suppose the miracle of Prometheus was about to be realized. But we," said he, looking upwards, "are taught to form a better judgment between what man can do and the productions of the Deity."

Some subjects of natural history were painted on the walls, and the philosopher fixed the attention of his guests upon the half-reasoning elephant, of which he mentioned several anecdotes, which they listened to with great eagerness.

A distant strain was here heard, as if of music in the woods, penetrating by fits through the hoarse roar of the cascade, which, as it sunk immediately below the windows, filled the apartment with its deep voice.

"Apparently," said Agelastes, "the friends whom I expected are approaching, and bring with them the means of enchanting another sense. It is well they do so, since wisdom tells us that we best honor the Deity by enjoying the gifts he has provided us."

These words called the attention of the philosopher's Frankish guests to the preparations exhibited in this tasteful saloon. These were made for an entertainment in the manner of the ancient Romans, and couches, which were laid beside a table ready decked, announced that the male guests, at least, were to assist at the banquet in the usual recumbent posture of the ancients, while seats, placed among the couches, seemed to say that females were expected, who

would observe the Grecian customs, in eating seated. The preparations for good cheer were such as, though limited in extent, could scarce be excelled in quality, either by the splendid dishes which decked Trimalchio's banquet of former days, or the lighter delicacies of Grecian cookery, or the succulent and highly-spiced messes indulged in by the nations of the East, to whichever they happened to give the preference ; and it was with an air of some vanity that Agelastes asked his guests to share a poor pilgrim's meal.

"We care little for dainties," said the Count ; "nor does our present course of life as pilgrims, bound by a vow, allow us much choice on such subjects. Whatever is food for soldiers suffices the Countess and myself ; for, with our will, we would at every hour be ready for battle, and the less time we use in preparing for the field, it is even so much the better. Sit then, Brenhilda, since the good man will have it so, and let us lose no time in refreshment, lest we waste that which should be otherwise employed."

"A moment's forgiveness," said Agelastes, "until the arrival of my other friends, whose music you may now hear is close at hand, and who will not long, I may safely promise. divide you from your meal."

"For that," said the Count, "there is no haste ; and since you seem to account it a part of civil manners, Brenhilda and I can with ease postpone our repast ; unless you will permit us, what I own would be more pleasing, to take a morsel of bread and a cup of water presently, and, thus refreshed, to leave the space clear for your more curious and more familiar guests ?"

"The saints above forbid !" said Agelastes. "Guests so honored never before pressed these cushions, nor could do so, if the sacred family of the imperial Alexius himself even now stood at the gate."

He had hardly uttered these words, when the full-blown peal of a trumpet, louder in a tenfold degree than the strains of music they had before heard, was now sounded in the front of the temple, piercing through the murmur of the waterfall, as a Damascus blade penetrates the armor, and assailing the ears of the hearers, as the sword pierces the flesh of him who wears the harness.

"You seem surprised or alarmed, father," said Count Robert. "Is there danger near, and do you distrust our protection ?"

"No," said Agelastes, "that would give me confidence in any extremity ; but these sounds excite awe, not fear. They

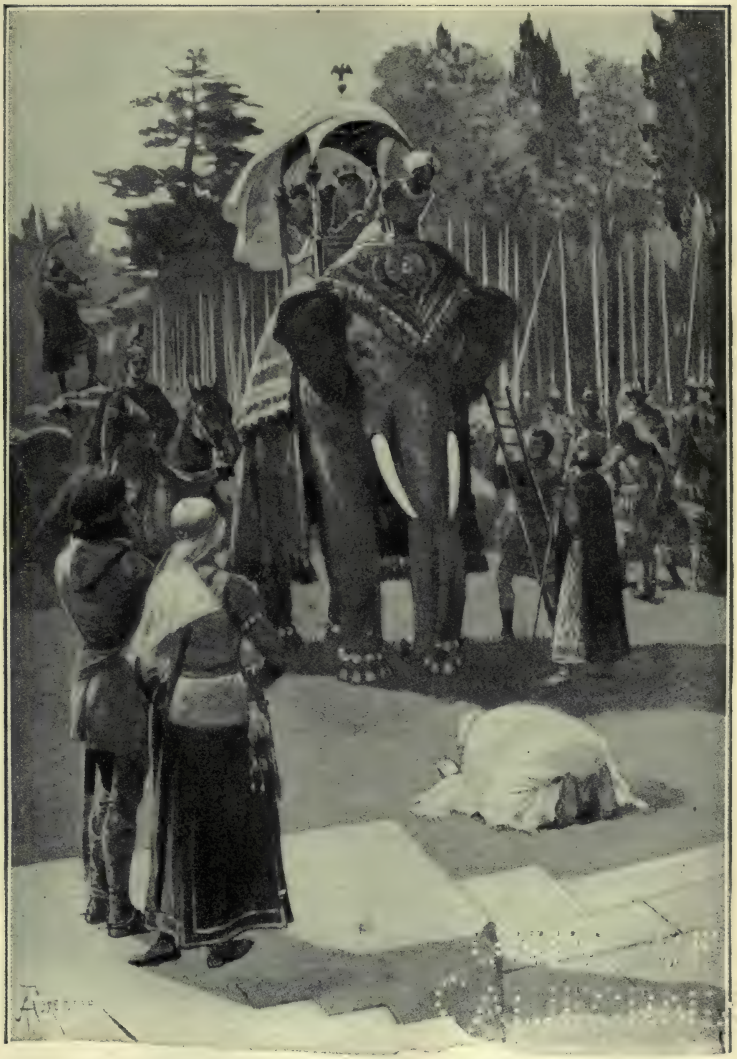
tell me that some of the imperial family are about to be my guests. Yet fear nothing, my noble friends ; they, whose look is life, are ready to shower their favors with profusion upon strangers so worthy of honor as they will see here. Meantime, my brow must touch my threshold in order duly to welcome them." So saying, he hurried to the outer door of the building.

"Each land has its customs," said the Count, as he followed his host, with his wife hanging on his arm ; "but, Brenhilda, as they are so various, it is little wonder that they appear unseemly to each other. Here, however, in deference to my entertainer, I stoop my crest, in the manner which seems to be required." So saying, he followed Agelastes into the ante-room, where a new scene awaited them.

CHAPTER XIII

Agelastes gained his threshold before Count Robert of Paris and his lady. He had, therefore, time to make his prostrations before a huge animal, then unknown to the Western world, but now universally distinguished as the elephant. On its back was a pavilion, or palanquin, within which were inclosed the august persons of the Empress Irene and her daughter Anna Comnena. Nicephorus Briennius attended the princesses in the command of a gallant body of light horse, whose splendid armor would have given more pleasure to the crusader if it had possessed less an air of useless wealth and effeminate magnificence. But the effect which it produced in its appearance was as brilliant as could well be conceived. The officers alone of this *corps de garde* followed Nicephorus to the platform, prostrated themselves while the ladies of the imperial house descended, and rose up again under a cloud of waving plumes and flashing lances when they stood secure upon the platform in front of the building. Here the somewhat aged, but commanding, form of the Empress, aud the still juvenile beauties of the fair historian, were seen to great advantage. In the front of a deep background of spears and waving crests stood the sounder of the sacred trumpet, conspicuous by his size and the richness of his apparel; he kept his post on a rock above the stone staircase, and, by an occasional note of his instrument, intimated to the squadrons beneath that they should stay their progress and attend the motions of the Empress and the wife of the Cæsar.

The fair form of the Countess Brenhilda, and the fantastic appearance of her half-masculine garb, attracted the attention of the ladies of Alexius's family, but was too extraordinary to command their admiration. Agelastes became sensible there was a necessity that he should introduce his guests to each other, if he desired they should meet on satisfactory terms. "May I speak," he said, "and live? The armed strangers whom you find now with me are worthy companions of those myriads whom zeal for the suffering inhabitants of Palestine has brought from the western extremity of Europe, at once to enjoy the countenance of Alexius



"He had, therefore, time to make his prostrations before a huge animal, then unknown to the Western world.'

Comnenus and to aid him, since it pleases him to accept their assistance, in expelling the paynims from the bounds of the sacred empire, and garrison those regions in their stead as vassals of his Imperial Majesty."

"We are pleased," said the Empress, "worthy Agelastes, that you should be kind to those who are disposed to be so reverent to the Emperor. And we are rather disposed to talk with them ourselves, that our daughter, whom Apollo hath gifted with the choice talent of recording what she sees, may become acquainted with one of those female warriors of the West of whom we have heard so much by common fame, and yet know so little with certainty."

"Madam," said the Count, "I can but rudely express to you what I have to find fault with in the explanation which this old man hath given of our purpose in coming hither. Certain it is, we neither owe Alexius fealty nor had we the purpose of paying him any, when we took the vow upon ourselves which brought us against Asia. We came, because we understood that the Holy Land had been torn from the Greek Emperor by the Pagans, Saracens, Turks, and other infidels from whom we are come to win it back. The wisest and most prudent among us have judged it necessary to acknowledge the Emperor's authority, since there was no such safe way of passing to the discharge of our vow as that of acknowledging fealty to him, as the best mode of preventing quarrels among Christian states. We, though independent of any earthly king, do not pretend to be greater men than they, and therefore have condescended to pay the same homage."

The Empress colored several times with indignation in the course of this speech, which, in more passages than one, was at variance with those imperial maxims of the Grecian court which held its dignity so high, and plainly intimated a tone of opinion which was depreciating to the Emperor's power. But the Empress Irene had received instructions from her imperial spouse to beware how she gave, or even took, any ground of quarrel with the crusaders, who, though coming in the appearance of subjects, were, nevertheless, too punctilious and ready to take fire to render them safe discussers of delicate differences. She made a graceful reverence accordingly, as if she had scarce understood what the Count of Paris had explained so bluntly.

At this moment the appearance of the principal persons on either hand attracted, in a wonderful degree, the attention of the other party, and there seemed to exist among them a

general desire of further acquaintance, and, at the same time, a manifest difficulty in expressing such a wish.

Agelastes—to begin with the master of the house—had risen from the ground indeed, but without venturing to assume an upright posture : he remained before the imperial ladies with his body and head still bent, his hand interposed between his eyes and their faces, like a man that would shade his eyesight from the level sun, and awaited in silence the commands of those to whom he seemed to think it disrespectful to propose the slightest action, save by testifying in general that his house and his slaves were at their unlimited command. The Countess of Paris, on the other hand, and her warlike husband, were the peculiar objects of curiosity to Irene and her accomplished daughter, Anna Comnena ; and it occurred to both these imperial ladies that they had never seen finer specimens of human strength and beauty ; but, by a natural instinct, they preferred the manly bearing of the husband to that of the wife, which seemed to her own sex rather too haughty and too masculine to be altogether pleasing.

Count Robert and his lady had also their own object of attention in the newly arrived group, and, to speak truth, it was nothing else than the peculiarities of the monstrous animal which they now saw, for the first time, employed as a beast of burden in the service of the fair Irene and her daughter. The dignity and splendor of the elder princess, the grace and vivacity of the younger, were alike lost in Brenhilda's earnest inquiries into the history of the elephant, and the use which it made of its trunk, tusks, and huge ears, upon different occasions.

Another person who took a less direct opportunity to gaze on Brenhilda with a deep degree of interest was the Cæsar, Nicephorus. This prince kept his eye as steadily upon the Frankish countess as he could well do without attracting the attention, and exciting perhaps the suspicions, of his wife and mother-in-law ; he therefore endeavored to restore speech to an interview which would have been awkward without it. "It is possible," he said, "beautiful Countess, that, this being your first visit to the Queen of the World, you have never hitherto seen the singularly curious animal called the elephant."

"Pardon me," said the Countess, "I have been treated by this learned gentleman to a sight and some account of that wonderful creature."

By all who heard this observation, the Lady Brenhilda was

supposed to have made a satirical thrust at the philosopher himself, who, in the imperial court, usually went by the name of the Elephant.

"No one could describe the beast more accurately than Agelastes," said the Princess, with a smile of intelligence, which went round her attendants.

"He knows its docility, its sensibility, and its fidelity," said the philosopher in a subdued tone.

"True, good Agelastes," said the Princess; "we should not criticise the animal which kneels to take us up. Come, lady of a foreign land," she continued, turning to the Frank count, and especially his countess, "and you her gallant lord! When you return to your native country, you shall say you have seen the imperial family partake of their food, and in so far acknowledge themselves to be of the same clay with other mortals, sharing their poorest wants, and relieving them in the same manner."

"That, gentle lady, I can well believe," said Count Robert; "my curiosity would be more indulged by seeing this strange animal at his food."

"You will see the elephant more conveniently at his mess within doors," answered the Princess, looking at Agelastes.

"Lady," said Brenhilda, "I would not willingly refuse an invitation given in courtesy, but the sun has waxed low unnoticed, and we must return to the city."

"Be not afraid," said the fair historian: "you shall have the advantage of our imperial escort to protect you in your return."

"Fear—afraid—escort—protect! These are words I know not. Know, lady, that my husband, the noble Count of Paris, is my sufficient escort; and even were he not with me, Brenhilda de Aspramonte fears nothing, and can defend herself."

"Fair daughter," said Agelastes, "if I may be permitted to speak, you mistake the gracious intentions of the Princess, who expresses herself as to a lady of her own land. What she desires is to learn from you some of the most marked habits and manners of the Franks, of which you are so beautiful an example; and in return for such information the illustrious princess would be glad to procure your entrance to those spacious collections where animals from all corners of the habitable world have been assembled at the command of our Emperor Alexius, as if to satisfy the wisdom of those sages to whom all creation is known, from the deer so small in size that it is exceeded by an ordinary rat to that huge

and singular inhabitant of Africa that can browse on the tops of trees that are forty feet high, while the length of its hind legs does not exceed the half of that wondrous height."

"It is enough," said the Countess, with some eagerness; but Agelastes had got a point of discussion after his own mind.

"There is also," he said, "that huge lizard, which, resembling in shape the harmless inhabitant of the moors of other countries, is in Egypt a monster thirty feet in length, clothed in impenetrable scales, and moaning over his prey when he catches it, with the hope and purpose of drawing others within his danger, by mimicking the lamentations of humanity."

"Say no more, father!" exclaimed the lady. "My Robert, we will go, will we not, where such objects are to be seen?"

"There is also," said Agelastes, who saw that he would gain his point by addressing himself to the curiosity of the strangers, "the huge animal, wearing on its back an invulnerable vestment, having on its nose a horn, and sometimes two, the folds of whose hide are of the most immense thickness, and which never knight was able to wound."

"We will go, Robert, will we not?" reiterated the Countess.

"Ay," replied the Count, "and teach these Easterns how to judge of a knight's sword by a single blow of my trusty Tranchefer."

"And who knows," said Brenhilda, "since this is a land of enchantment, but what some person, who is languishing in a foreign shape, may have their enchantment unexpectedly dissolved by a stroke of the good weapon?"

"Say no more, father!" exclaimed the Count. "We will attend this princess, since such she is, were her whole escort bent to oppose our passage, instead of being by her command to be our guard. For know, all who hear me, thus much of the nature of the Franks, that, when you tell us of danger and difficulties, you give us the same desire to travel the road where they lie as other men have in seeking either pleasure or profit in the paths in which such are to be found."

As the Count pronouced these words, he struck his hand upon his Tranchefer, as an illustration of the manner in which he purposed upon occasion to make good his way. The courtly circle startled somewhat at the clash of steel and the fiery look of the chivalrous Count Robert. The Em-

press indulged her alarm by retreating into the inner apartment of the pavilion.

With a grace which was rarely deigned to any but those in close alliance with the imperial family, Anna Comnena took the arm of the noble Count. "I see," she said, "that the imperial mother has honored the house of the learned Agelastes by leading the way; therefore, to teach you Grecian breeding must fall to my share." Saying this, she conducted him to the inner apartment.

"Fear not for your wife," she said, as she noticed the Frank look round: "our husband, like ourselves, has pleasure in showing attention to the stranger, and will lead the Countess to our board. It is not the custom of the imperial family to eat in company with strangers; but we thank Heaven for having instructed us in that civility which can know no degradation in dispensing with ordinary rules to do honor to strangers of such merit as yours. I know it will be my mother's request that you will take your places without ceremony; and also, although the grace be somewhat particular, I am sure that it will have my imperial father's approbation."

"Be it as your ladyship lists," said Count Robert. "There are few men to whom I would yield place at the board, if they had not gone before me in the battle-field. To a lady, especially so fair a one, I willingly yield my place and bend my knee, whenever I have the good hap to meet her."

The Princess Anna, instead of feeling herself awkward in the discharge of the extraordinary, and, as she might have thought it, degrading, office of ushering a barbarian chief to the banquet, felt, on the contrary, flattered at having bent to her purpose a heart so obstinate as that of Count Robert, and elated, perhaps, with a certain degree of satisfied pride while under his momentary protection.

The Empress Irene had already seated herself at the head of the table. She looked with some astonishment when her daughter and son-in-law, taking their seats at her right and left hand, invited the Count and Countess of Paris, the former to recline, the latter to sit at the board, in the places next to themselves; but she had received the strictest orders from her husband to be deferential in every respect to the strangers, and did not think it right, therefore, to interpose any ceremonious scruples.

The Countess took her seat, as indicated, beside the Cæsar; and the Count, instead of reclining in the mode of the Grecian men, also seated himself in the European fashion by the Princess.

"I will not lie prostrate," said he, laughing, "except in consideration of a blow weighty enough to compel me to do so; nor then either, if I am able to start up and return it."

The service of the table then began, and, to say truth, it appeared to be an important part of the business of the day. The officers who attended to perform their several duties of deckers of the table, sewers of the banquet, removers and tasters to the imperial family, thronged into the banqueting-room, and seemed to vie with each other in calling upon Agelastes for spices, condiments, sauces, and wines of various kinds, the variety and multiplicity of their demands being apparently devised *ex preposito,* for stirring the patience of the philosopher. But Agelastes, who had anticipated most of their requests, however unusual, supplied them completely, or in the greatest part, by the ready agency of his active slave Diogenes, to whom, at the same time, he contrived to transfer all blame for the absence of such articles as he was unable to provide.

"Be Homer my witness, the accomplished Virgil, and the curious felicity of Horace, that, trifling and unworthy as this banquet was, my note of directions to this thrice-unhappy slave gave the instructions to procure every ingredient necessary to convey to each dish its proper gusto. Ill-omened carrion that thou art, wherefore placedst thou the pickled cucumber so far apart from the boar's head, and why are these superb congers unprovided with a requisite quantity of fennel? The divorce betwixt the shell-fish and the Chian wine in a presence like this, is worthy of the divorce of thine own soul from thy body: or, to say the least, of a life-long residence in the *pistrinum.*" While thus the philosopher proceeded with threats, curses, and menaces against his slave, the stranger might have an opportunity of comparing the little torrent of his domestic eloquence, which the manners of the times did not consider as ill-bred, with the louder and deeper share of adulation towards his guests. They mingled like the oil with the vinegar and pickles which Diogenes mixed for the sauce. Thus the Count and Countess had an opportunity to estimate the happiness and the felicity reserved for those slaves whom the omnipotent Jupiter, in the plenitude of compassion for their state, and in guerdon of their good morals, had dedicated to the service of a philosopher. The share they themselves took in the banquet was finished with a degree of speed which gave surprise not only to their host, but also to the imperial guests.

The Count helped himself carelessly out of a dish which

stood near him, and partaking of a draught of wine, without inquiring whether it was of the vintage which the Greeks held it matter of conscience to mingle with that species of food, he declared himself satisfied ; nor could the obliging entreaties of his neighbor, Anna Comnena, induce him to partake of other messes represented as being either delicacies or curiosities. His spouse eat still more moderately of the food which seemed most simply cooked, and stood nearest her at the board, and partook of a cup of crystal water, which she slightly tinged with wine, at the persevering entreaty of the Cæsar. They then relinquished the farther business of the banquet, and, leaning back upon their seats, occupied themselves in watching the liberal credit done to the feast by the rest of the guests present.

A modern synod of gourmands would hardly have equaled the imperial family of Greece seated at a philosophical banquet, whether in the critical knowledge displayed of the science of eating in all its branches or in the practical cost and patience with which they exercised it; the ladies, indeed, did not eat much of any one dish, but they tasted of almost all that were presented to them, and their name was legion. Yet, after a short time, in Homeric phrase, the rage of thirst and hunger was assuaged, or, more probably, the Princess Anna Comnena was tired of being an object of some inattention to the guest who sat next her, and who, joining his high military character to his very handsome presence, was a person by whom few ladies would willingly be neglected. There is no new guise, says our father Chaucer, but what resembles an old one ; and the address of Anna Comnena to the Frankish count might resemble that of a modern lady of fashion in her attempts to engage in conversation the exquisite who sits by her side in an apparently absent fit. "We have piped unto you," said the Princess, "and you have not danced. We have sung to you the jovial chorus of *Evoe, evoe,* and you will neither worship Comus nor Bacchus. Are we then to judge you a follower of the Muses, in whose service, as well as in that of Phœbus, we ourselves pretend to be enlisted ?"

"Fair lady," replied the Frank, "be not offended at my stating once for all, in plain terms, that I am a Christian man, spitting at and bidding defiance to Apollo, Bacchus, Comus, and all other heathen deities whatsoever."

"O ! cruel interpretation of my unwary words !" said the Princess. "I did but mention the gods of music, poetry, and eloquence, worshiped by our divine philosophers, and

whose names are still used to distinguish the arts and sciences over which they presided, and the Count interprets it seriously into a breach of the Second Commandment! Our Lady preserve me, we must take care how we speak, when our words are so sharply interpreted."

The Count laughed as the Princess spoke. "I had no offensive meaning, madam," he said, "nor would I wish to interpret your words otherwise than as being most innocent and praiseworthy. I shall suppose that your speech contained all that was fair and blameless. You are, I have understood, one of those who, like our worthy host, express in composition the history and feats of the warlike time in which you live, and give to the posterity which shall succeed us the knowledge of the brave deeds which have been achieved in our day. I respect the task to which you have dedicated yourself, and know not how a lady could lay after ages under an obligation to her in the same degree, unless, like my wife, Brenhilda, she were herself to be the actress of deeds which she recorded. And, by the way, she now looks towards her neighbor at the table as if she were about to rise and leave him; her inclinations are towards Constantinople, and, with your ladyship's permission, I cannot allow her to go thither alone."

"That you shall neither of you do," said Anna Comnena; "since we all go to the capital directly, and for the purpose of seeing those wonders of nature of which numerous examples have been collected by the splendor of my imperial father. If my husband seems to have given offense to the Countess, do not suppose that it was intentionally dealt to her; on the contrary, you will find the good man, when you are better acquainted with him, to be one of those simple persons who manage so unhappily what they mean for civilities, that those to whom they are addressed receive them frequently in another sense."

The Countess of Paris, however, refused again to sit down to the table from which she had risen, so that Agelastes and his imperial guests saw themselves under the necessity either to permit the strangers to depart, which they seemed unwilling to do; or to detain them by force, to attempt which might not perhaps have been either safe or pleasant; or, lastly, to have waived the etiquette of rank, and set out along with them, at the same time managing their dignity so as to take the initiatory step, though the departure took place upon the motion of their wilful guests. Much tumult there was—bustling, disputing, and shouting

—among the troops and officers who were thus moved from their repast two hours at least sooner than had been experienced upon similar occasions in the memory of the oldest among them. A different arrangement of the imperial party likewise seemed to take place by mutual consent.

Nicephorus Brennius ascended the seat upon the elephant, and remained there placed beside his august mother-in-law. Agelastes, on a sober-minded palfrey, which permitted him to prolong his philosophical harangues at his own pleasure, rode beside the Countess Brenhilda, whom he made the principal object of his oratory. The fair historian, though she usually traveled in a litter, preferred upon this occasion a spirited horse, which enabled her to keep pace with Count Robert of Paris, on whose imagination, if not his feelings, she seemed to have it in view to work a marked impression. The conversation of the Empress with her son in-law requires no special detail. It was a tissue of criticisms upon the manners and behavior of the Franks, and a hearty wish that they might be soon transported from the realms of Greece, never more to return. Such was at least the tone of the Empress, nor did the Cæsar find it convenient to express any more tolerant opinion of the strangers. On the other hand, Agelastes made a long circuit ere he ventured to approach the subject which he wished to introduce. He spoke of the menagerie of the Emperor as a most superb collection of natural history; he extolled different persons at court for having encouraged Alexius Comnenus in this wise and philosophical amusement; but, finally, the praise of all others was abandoned that the philosopher might dwell upon that of Nicephorus Briennus to whom the cabinet or collection of Constantinople was indebted, he said, for the principal treasures it contained.

"I am glad it is so," said the haughty countess, without lowering her voice or affecting any change of manner—"I am glad that he understands some things better worth understanding than whispering with stranger young women. Credit me, if he gives much license to his tongue among such women of my country as these stirring times may bring hither, some one or other of them will fling him into the cataract which dashes below."

"Pardon me, fair lady," said Agelastes; "no female heart could meditate an action so atrocious against so fine a form as that of the Cæsar Nicephorus Briennius."

"Put it not on that issue, father," said the offended countess; "for, by my patroness saint, Our Lady of the Broken

Lances, had it not been for regard to these two ladies, who seemed to intend some respect to my husband and myself, that same Nicephorus should have been as perfectly a Lord of the Broken Bones as any Cæsar who has borne the title since the great Julius."

The philosopher, upon this explicit information, began to entertain some personal fear for himself, and hastened, by diverting the conversation, which he did with great dexterity; to the story of Hero and Leander, to put the affront received out of the head of this unscrupulous amazon.

Meantime, Count Robert of Paris was engrossed, as it may be termed, by the fair Anna Comnena. She spoke on all subjects, on some better, doubtless, others worse, but on none did she suspect herself of any deficiency; while the good count wished heartily within himself that his companion had been safely in bed with the enchanted Princess of Zulichium. She performed, right or wrong, the part of a panegyrist of the Normans, until at length the Count, tired of hearing her prate of she knew not exactly what, broke in as follows:—

"Lady," he said, "notwithstanding I and my followers are sometimes so named, yet we are not Normans, who come hither as a numerous and separate body of pilgrims, under the command of their Duke Robert, a valiant, though extravagant, thoughtless, and weak man. I say nothing against the fame of these Normans. They conquered, in our father's day, a kingdom far stronger than their own, which men call England; I see that you entertain some of the natives of which country in your pay, under the name of Varangians. Although defeated, as I said, by the Normans, they are, nevertheless, a brave race; nor would we think ourselves much dishonored by mixing in battle with them. Still, we are the valiant Franks who had their dwelling on the eastern banks of the Rhine and of the Saale, who were converted to the Christian faith by the celebrated Clovis, and are sufficient, by our numbers and courage, to reconquer the Holy Land, should all Europe besides stand neutral in the contest."

There are few things more painful to the vanity of a person like the Princess than the being detected in an egregious error at the moment she is taking credit to herself for being peculiarly accurately informed.

"A false slave, who knew not what he was saying, I suppose," said the Princess, "imposed upon me the belief that the Varangians were the natural enemies of the Normans.

I see him marching there by the side of Achilles Tatius, the leader of his corps. Call him hither, you officers,—yonder tall man, I mean, with the battle-ax upon his shoulder."

Hereward, distinguished by his post at the head of the squadron, was summoned from thence to the presence of the Princess, where he made his military obeisance with a cast of sternness in his aspect, as his glance lighted upon the proud look of the Frenchman who rode beside Anna Comnena.

"Did I not understand thee, fellow," said Anna Comnena, "to have informed me, nearly a month ago, that the Normans and the Franks were the same people, and enemies to the race from which you spring?"

"The Normans are our mortal enemies, lady," answered Hereward, "by whom we were driven from our native land. The Franks are subjects of the same lord-paramount with the Normans, and therefore they neither love the Varangians nor are beloved by them."

"Good fellow," said the French count, "you do the Franks wrong, and ascribe to the Varangians, although not unnaturally, an undue degree of importance, when you suppose that a race which has ceased to exist as an independent nation for more than a generation can be either an object of interest or resentment to such as we are."

"I am no stranger," said the Varangian, "to the pride of your heart, or the precedence which you assume over those who have been less fortunate in war than yourselves. It is God who casteth down and who buildeth up, nor is there in the world a prospect to which the Varangians would look forward with more pleasure than that a hundred of their number should meet in a fair field, either with the oppressive Normans or their modern compatriots, the vain Frenchmen, and let God be the judge which is most worthy of victory."

"You take an insolent advantage of the chance," said the Count of Paris, "which gives you an unlooked-for opportunity to brave a nobleman."

"It is my sorrow and shame," said the Varangian, "that that opportunity is not complete; and that there is a chain around me which forbids me to say, 'Slay me, or I'll kill thee before we part from this spot!'"

"Why, thou foolish and hot-brained churl," replied the Count, "what right hast thou to the honor of dying by my blade? Thou art mad, or hast drained the ale-cup so deeply that thou knowest not what thou thinkest or sayest."

"Thou liest," said the Varangian, "though such a reproach be the utmost scandal of thy race."

The Frenchman motioned his hand quicker than light to his sword, but instantly withdrew it, and said with dignity, "Thou canst not offend me."

"But thou," said the exile, "hast offended me in a matter which can only be atoned by thy manhood."

"Where and how?" answered the Count; "although it is needless to ask the question, which thou canst not answer rationally."

"Thou hast this day," answered the Varangian, "put a mortal affront upon a great prince, whom thy master calls his ally, and by whom thou hast been received with every rite of hospitality. Him thou hast affronted as one peasant at a merry-making would do shame to another, and this dishonor thou hast done to him in the very face of his own chiefs and princes, and the nobles from every court of Europe."

"It was thy master's part to resent my conduct," said the Frenchman, "if in reality he so much felt it as an affront."

"But that," said Hereward, "did not consist with the manners of his country to do. Besides that, we trusty Varangians esteem ourselves bound by our oath as much to defend our Emperor, while the service lasts, on every inch of his honor as on every foot of his territory; I therefore tell thee, sir knight, sir count, or whatever thou callest thyself, there is mortal quarrel between thee and the Varangian Guard, ever and until thou hast fought it out in fair and manly battle, body to body, with one of the said Imperial Varangians, when duty and opportunity shall permit—and so God schaw the right!"

As this passed in the French language, the meaning escaped the understanding of such imperialists as were within hearing at the time; and the Princess, who waited with some astonishment till the crusader and the Varangian had finished their conference, when it was over, said to him with interest, "I trust you feel that poor man's situation to be too much at a distance from your own to admit of your meeting him in what is termed knightly battle?"

"On such a question," said the knight, "I have but one answer to any lady who does not, like my Brenhilda, cover herself with a shield, and bear a sword by her side and the heart of a knight in her bosom."

"And suppose for once," said the Princess Anna Comnena, "that I possessed such titles to your confidence, what would your answer be to me?"

"There can be little reason for concealing it," said the Count. "The Varangian is a brave man and a strong one; it is contrary to my vow to shun his challenge, and perhaps I shall derogate from my rank by accepting it; but the world is wide, and he is yet to be born who has seen Robert of Paris shun the face of mortal man. By means of some gallant officer among the Emperor's guards this poor fellow, who nourishes so strange an ambition, shall learn that he shall have his wish gratified."

"And then—— ?" said Anna Comnena.

"Why, then," said the Count, "in the poor man's own language, God schaw the right!"

"Which is to say," said the Princess, "that, if my father has an officer of his guards honorable enough to forward so pious and reasonable a purpose, the Emperor must lose an ally, in whose faith he puts confidence, or a most trusty and faithful soldier of his personal guard, who has distinguished himself upon many occasions?"

"I am happy to hear," said the Count, "that the man bears such a character. In truth, his ambition ought to have some foundation. The more I think of it, the rather am I of opinion that there is something generous, rather than derogatory, in giving to the poor exile, whose thoughts are so high and noble, those privileges of a man of rank which some who were born in such lofty station are too cowardly to avail themselves of. Yet despond not, noble princess; the challenge is not yet accepted of, and if it was, the issue is in the hand of God. As for me, whose trade is war, the sense that I have something so serious to transact with this resolute man will keep me from other less honorable quarrels, in which a lack of occupation might be apt to involve me."

The Princess made no farther observation, being resolved, by private remonstrance to Achilles Tatius, to engage him to prevent a meeting which might be fatal to the one or the other of two brave men. The town now darkened before them, sparkling, at the same time, through its obscurity, by the many lights which illuminated the houses of the citizens. The royal cavalcade held their way to the Golden Gate, where the trusty centurion put his guard under arms to receive them.

"We must now break off, fair ladies," said the Count, as the party, having now dismounted, were standing together at the private gate of the Blacquernal Palace, "and find as we can the lodgings which we occupied last night."

"Under your favor, no," said the Empress. "You must be content to take your supper and repose in quarters more fitting your rank; and," added Irene, "with no worse quartermaster than one of the imperial family who has been your traveling companion."

This the Count heard with considerable inclination to accept the hospitality which was so readily offered. Although as devoted as a man could well be to the charms of his Brenhilda, the very idea never having entered his head of preferring another's beauty to hers, yet, nevertheless, he had naturally felt himself flattered by the attentions of a woman of eminent beauty and very high rank; and the praises with which the Princess had loaded him had not entirely fallen to the ground. He was no longer in the humor in which the morning had found him, disposed to outrage the feelings of the Emperor and to insult his dignity; but, flattered by the adroit sycophancy which the old philosopher had learned from the schools, and the beautiful princess had been gifted with by nature, he assented to the Empress's proposal; the more readily, perhaps, that the darkness did not permit him to see that there was distinctly a shade of displeasure on the brow of Brenhilda. Whatever the cause, she cared not to express it, and the married pair had just entered that labyrinth of passages through which Hereward had formerly wandered, when a chamberlain and a female attendant, richly dressed, bent the knee before them, and offered them the means and place to adjust their attire, ere they entered the imperial presence. Brenhilda looked upon her apparel and arms, spotted with the blood of the insolent Scythian, and, amazon as she was, felt the shame of being carelessly and improperly dressed. The arms of the knight were also bloody, and in disarrangement.

"Tell my female squire, Agatha, to give her attendance," said the Countess. "She alone is in the habit of assisting to unarm and to attire me."

"Now, God be praised," thought the Grecian lady of the bed-chamber, "that I am not called to a toilet where smiths' hammers and tongs are likely to be the instruments most in request!"

"Tell Marcian, my armorer," said the Count, "to attend with the silver and blue suit of plate and mail which I won in a wager from the Count of Tholouse." *

"Might I not have the honor of adjusting your armor,"

* See Note 8.

said a splendidly drest courtier, with some marks of the armorer's profession, "since I have put on that of the Emperor himself, may his name be sacred?"

"And how many rivets hast thou clenched upon the occasion with this hand," said the Count, catching hold of it, "which looks as if it had never been washed save with milk of roses,—and with this childish toy?" pointing to a hammer, with ivory haft and silver head, which, stuck into a milk-white kidskin apron, the official wore as badges of his duty.

The armorer fell back in some confusion. "His grasp," he said to another domestic, "is like the seizure of a vice."

While this little scene passed apart, the Empress Irene, her daughter, and her son-in-law left the company, under pretense of making a necessary change in their apparel. Immediately after, Agelastes was required to attend the Emperor, and the strangers were conducted to two adjacent chambers of retirement, splendidly fitted up, and placed for the present at their disposal and that of their attendants. There we shall for a time leave them, assuming, with the assistance of their own attendants, a dress which their ideas regarded as most fit for a great occasion; those of the Grecian court willingly keeping apart from a task which they held nearly as formidable as assisting at the lair of a royal tiger or his bride.

Agelastes found the Emperor sedulously arranging his most splendid court-dress; for, as in the court of Pekin, the change of ceremonial attire was a great part of the ritual observed at Constantinople.

"Thou hast done well, wise Agelastes," said Alexius to the philosopher, as he approached with abundance of prostrations and genuflexions—"thou hast done well, and we are content with thee. Less than thy wit and address must have failed in separating from their company this tameless bull and unyoked heifer, over whom, if we obtain influence, we shall command, by every account, no small interest among those who esteem them the bravest in the host."

"My humble understanding," said Agelastes, "had been infinitely inferior to the management of so prudent and sagacious a scheme, had it not been shaped forth and suggested by the inimitable wisdom of your Most Sacred Imperial Highness."

"We are aware," said Alexius, "that we had the merit of blocking forth the scheme of detaining these persons, either by their choice as allies or by main force as hostages. Their

friends, ere yet they have missed them, will be engaged in war with the Turks, and at no liberty, if the devil should suggest such an undertaking, to take arms against the sacred empire. Thus, Agelastes, we shall obtain hostages at least as important and as valuable as that Count of Vermandois, whose liberty the tremendous Godfrey of Bouillon extorted from us by threats of instant war."

"Pardon," said Agelastes, "if I add another reason to those which of themselves so happily support your august resolution. It is possible that we may, by observing the greatest caution and courtesy towards these strangers, win them in good earnest to our side."

"I conceive you—I conceive you," said the Emperor; "and this very night I will exhibit myself to this count and his lady in the royal presence-chamber, in the richest robes which our wardrobe can furnish. The lions of Solomon shall roar, the golden tree of Comnenus shall display its wonders, and the feeble eyes of these Franks shall be altogether dazzled by the splendor of the empire. These spectacles cannot but sink into their minds, and dispose them to become the allies and servants of a nation so much more powerful, skilful, and wealthy than their own. Thou hast something to say, Agelastes. Years and long study have made thee wise; though we have given our opinion, thou mayst speak thine own and live."

Thrice three times did Agelastes press his brow against the hem of the Emperor's garment, and great seemed his anxiety to find such words as might intimate his dissent from his sovereign, yet save him from the informality of contradicting him expressly.

"These sacred words, in which your Sacred Highness has uttered your most just and accurate opinions, are undeniable, and incapable of contradiction, were any vain enough to attempt to impugn them. Nevertheless, be it lawful to say, that men show the wisest arguments in vain to those who do not understand reason, just as you would in vain exhibit a curious piece of limning to the blind, or endeavor to bribe, as Scripture saith, a sow by the offer of a precious stone. The fault is not, in such case, in the accuracy of your sacred reasoning, but in the obtuseness and perverseness of the barbarians to whom it is applied."

"Speak more plainly," said the Emperor; "how often must we tell thee that, in cases in which we really want counsel, we know we must be contented to sacrifice ceremony?"

"Then, in plain words," said Agelastes, "these European barbarians are like no others under the cope of the universe, either in the things on which they look with desire or in those which they consider as discouraging. The treasures of this noble empire, so far as they affected their wishes, would merely inspire them with the desire to go to war with a nation possessed of so much wealth, and who, in their self-conceited estimation, were less able to defend than they themselves are powerful to assail. Of such a description, for instance, is Bohemond of Tarentum, and such a one is many a crusader less able and sagacious than he; for I think I need not tell your Imperial Divinity that he holds his own self-interest to be the devoted guide of his whole conduct through this extraordinary war; and that, therefore, you can justly calculate his course when once you are aware from which point of the compass the wind of avarice and self-interest breathes with respect to him. But there are spirits among the Franks of a very different nature, and who must be acted upon by very different motives, if we would make ourselves masters of their actions and the principles by which they are governed. If it were lawful to do so, I would request your Majesty to look at the manner by which an artful juggler of your court achieves his imposition upon the eyes of spectators, yet heedfully disguises the means by which he attains his object. This people—I mean the more lofty-minded of these crusaders, who act up to the pretenses of the doctrine which they call chivalry—despise the thirst of gold, and gold itself, unless to hilt their swords, or to furnish forth some necessary expenses, as alike useless and contemptible. The man who can be moved by the thirst of gain they contemn, scorn, and despise, and liken him, in the meanness of his objects, to the most paltry serf that ever followed the plow or wielded the spade. On the other hand, if it happens that they actually need gold, they are sufficiently unceremonious in taking it where they can most easily find it. Thus, they are neither easily to be bribed by giving them sums of gold nor to be starved into compliance by withholding what chance may render necessary for them. In the one case, they set no value upon the gift of a little paltry yellow dross; on the other, they are accustomed to take what they want."

"Yellow dross!" interrupted Alexius. "Do they call that noble metal, equally respected by Roman and barbarian, by rich and poor, by great and mean, by churchmen and laymen, which all mankind are fighting for, plotting for, plan-

ning for, intriguing for, and damning themselves for, both soul and body, by the opprobrious name of yellow dross? They are mad, Agelastes—utterly mad. Perils and dangers, penalties and scourges, are the only arguments to which men who are above the universal influence which moves all others can possibly be accessible."

"Nor are they," said Agelastes, "more accessible to fear than they are to self-interest. They are indeed, from their boyhood, brought up to scorn those passions which influence ordinary minds, whether by means of avarice to impel or of fear to hold back. So much is this the case, that what is enticing to other men must, to interest them, have the piquant sauce of extreme danger. I told, for instance, to this very hero a legend of a Princess of Zulichium, who lay on an enchanted couch, beautiful as an angel, awaiting the chosen knight who should, by dispelling her enchanted slumbers, become master of her person, of her kingdom of Zulichium, and of her countless treasures; and, would your Imperial Majesty believe me, I could scarce get the gallant to attend to my legend, or take any interest in the adventure, till I assured him he would have to encounter a winged dragon, compared to which the largest of those in the Frank romances was but like a mere dragon-fly?"

"And did this move the gallant?" said the Emperor.

"So much so," replied the philosopher, "that, had I not unfortunately, by the earnestness of my description, awakened the jealousy of his Penthesilea of a countess, he had forgotton the crusade and all belonging to it, to go in quest of Zulichium and its slumbering sovereign."

"Nay, then," said the Emperor, "we have in our empire—make us sensible of the advantage!—innumerable tale-tellers who are not possessed in the slightest degree of that noble scorn of gold which is proper to the Franks, but shall, for a brace of besants, lie with the devil, and beat him to boot, if in that manner we can gain, as mariners say, the weather-gage of the Franks."

"Discretion," said Agelastes, "is in the highest degree necessary. Simply to lie is no very great matter: it is merely a departure from the truth, which is little different from missing a mark at archery, where the whole horizon, one point alone excepted, will alike serve the shooter's purpose; but to move the Frank as is desired requires a perfect knowledge of his temper and disposition, great caution and presence of mind, and the most versatile readiness in changing from one subject to another. Had I not myself been

somewhat alert, I might have paid the penalty of a false step in your Majesty's service by being flung into my own cascade by the virago whom I offended."

"A perfect Thalestris!" said the Emperor. "I shall take care what offense I give her."

"If I might speak and live," said Agelastes, "Cæsar Nicephorus Briennius had best adopt the same precaution."

"Nicephorus," said the Emperor, "must settle that with our daughter. I have ever told her that she gives him too much of that history, of which a page or two is sufficiently refreshing; but by our own self we must swear it, Agelastes, that, night after night, hearing nothing else would subdue the patience of a saint. Forget, good Agelastes, that thou hast heard me say such a thing—more especially, remember it not when thou art in the presence of our imperial wife and daughter."

"Nor were the freedoms taken by the Cæsar beyond the bounds of an innocent gallantry," said Agelastes; "but the Countess, I must needs say, is dangerous. She killed this day the Scythian Toxartis, by what seemed a mere fillip on the head."

"Hah!" said the Emperor, "I knew that Toxartis, and he was like enough to deserve his death, being a bold, unscrupulous marauder. Take notes, however, how it happened, the names of witnesses, etc., that, if necessary, we may exhibit the fact as a deed of aggression on the part of the Count and Countess of Paris, to the assembly of the crusaders."

"I trust," said Agelastes, "your Imperial Majesty will not easily resign the golden opportunity of gaining to your standard persons whose character stands so very high in chivalry. It would cost you but little to bestow upon them a Grecian island, worth a hundred of their own paltry lordship of Paris; and if it were given under the condition of their expelling the infidels or the disaffected who may have obtained the temporary possession, it would be so much the more likely to be an acceptable offer. I need not say that the whole knowledge, wisdom, and skill of the poor Agelastes is at your Imperial Majesty's disposal."

The Emperor paused for a moment, and then said, as if on full consideration, "Worthy Agelastes, I dare trust thee in this difficult and somewhat dangerous matter; but I will keep my purpose of exhibiting to them the lions of Solomon and the golden tree of our imperial house."

"To that there can be no objection," returned the philosopher; "only remember to exhibit few guards, for these Franks are like a fiery horse: when in temper he may be ridden with a silk thread, but when he has taken umbrage or suspicion, as they would likely do if they saw many armed men, a steel bridle would not restrain him."

"I will be cautious," said the Emperor, "in that particular, as well as others. Sound the silver bell, Agelastes, that the officers of our wardrobe may attend."

"One single word while your Highness is alone," said Agelastes. "Will your Imperial Majesty transfer to me the direction of your menagerie or collection of extraordinary creatures?"

"You make me wonder," said the Emperor, taking a signet, bearing upon it a lion, with the legend, *Vicit Leo ex tribu Judæ.* "This," he said, "will give thee the command of our dens. And now be candid for once with thy master, for deception is thy nature even with me—by what charm wilt thou subdue these untamed savages?"

"By the power of falsehood," replied Agelastes, with deep reverence.

"I believe thee an adept in it," said the Emperor. "And to which of their foibles wilt thou address it?"

"To their love of fame," said the philosopher; and retreated backwards out of the royal apartment, as the officers of the wardrobe entered to complete the investment of the Emperor in his imperial habiliments.

CHAPTER XIV

I will converse with iron-witted fools,
And unrespective boys; none are for me,
That look into me with considerate eyes;—
High-reaching Buckingham grows circumspect.
Richard III.

As they parted from each other, the Emperor and philosopher had each their own anxious thoughts on the interview which had passed between them—thoughts which they expressed in broken sentences and ejaculations, though, for the better understanding of the degree of estimation in which they held each other, we will give them a more regular and intelligible form.

"Thus, then," half-muttered, half-said Alexius, but so low as to hide his meaning from the officers of the wardrobe, who entered to do their office—"thus, then, this bookworm, this remnant of old heathen philosophy, who hardly believes, so God save me, the truth of the Christian creed, has topped his part so well that he forces his Emperor to dissemble in his presence. Beginning by being the buffoon of the court, he has wormed himself into all its secrets, made himself master of all its intrigues, conspired with my own son-in-law against me, debauched my guards—indeed so woven his web of deceit, that my life is safe no longer than he believes me the imperial dolt which I have affected to seem, in order to deceive him; fortunate that even so I can escape his cautionary anticipation of my displeasure, by avoiding to precipitate his measures of violence. But, were this sudden storm of the crusade fairly passed over, the ungrateful Cæsar, the boastful coward Achilles Tatius, and the bosom serpent Agelastes shall know whether Alexius Comnenus has been born their dupe. When Greek meets Greek, comes the strife of subtlety, as well as the tug of war." Thus saying, he resigned himself to the officers of his wardrobe, who proceeded to ornament him as the solemnity required.

"I trust him not," said Agelastes, the meaning of whose gestures and exclamations we, in like manner, render into a connected meaning. "I cannot and do not trust him: he somewhat overacts his part. He has borne himself upon

other occasions with the shrewd wit of his family the Comneni; yet he now trusts to the effect of his trumpery lions upon such a shrewd people as the Franks and Normans, and seems to rely upon me for the character of men with whom he has been engaged in peace and war for many years. This can be but to gain my confidence; for there were imperfect looks and broken sentences which seemed to say, 'Agelastes, the Emperor knows thee, and confides not in thee.' Yet the plot is successful and undiscovered, as far as can be judged; and were I to attempt to recede now, I were lost forever. A little time to carry on this intrigue with the Frank, when possibly, by the assistance of this gallant, Alexius shall exchange the crown for a cloister, or a still narrower abode; and then, Agelastes, thou deservest to be blotted from the roll of philosophers if thou canst not push out of the throne the conceited and luxurious Cæsar, and reign in his stead, a second Marcus Antoninus, when the wisdom of thy rule, long unfelt in a world which has been guided by tyrants and voluptuaries, shall soon obliterate recollection of the manner in which thy power was acquired. To work then—be active, and be cautious. The time requires it, and the prize deserves it."

While these thoughts passed through his mind, he arrayed himself, by the assistance of Diogenes, in a clean suit of that simple apparel in which he always frequented the court—a garb as unlike that of a candidate for royalty as it was a contrast to the magnificent robes with which Alexius was now investing himself.

In their separate apartments, or dressing-rooms, the Count of Paris and his lady put on the best apparel which they had prepared to meet such a chance upon their journey. Even in France, Robert was seldom seen in the peaceful cap and sweeping mantle whose high plumes and flowing folds were the garb of knights in times of peace. He was now arrayed in a splendid suit of armor, all except the head, which was bare otherwise than as covered by his curled locks. The rest of his person was sheathed in the complete mail of the time, richly inlaid with silver, which contrasted with the azure in which the steel was damasked. His spurs were upon his heels, his sword was by his side, and his triangular shield was suspended round his neck, bearing, painted upon it, a number of *fleurs-de-lis semées,* as it is called, upon the field, being the origin of those lily flowers which after times reduced to three only, and which were the terror of Europe, until they suffered so many reverses in our own time.

The extreme height of Count Robert's person adapted him for a garb which had a tendency to make persons of a lower stature appear rather dwarfish and thick when arrayed *cap-à-pie*. The features with their self-collected composure, and noble contempt of whatever could have astounded or shaken an ordinary mind, formed a well-fitted capital to the excellently porportioned and vigorous frame which they terminated. The Countess was in more peaceful attire ; but her robes were short and succinct, like those of one who might be called to hasty exercise. The upper part of her dress consisted of more than one tunic, sitting close to the body, while a skirt, descending from the girdle, and reaching to the ankles, embroidered elegantly but richly, completed an attire which a lady might have worn in much more modern times. Her tresses were covered with a light steel head-piece, though some of them, escaping, played round her face, and gave relief to those handsome features which might otherwise have seemed too formal, if closed entirely within the verge of steel. Over these under-garments was flung a rich velvet cloak of a deep green color, descending from the head, where a species of hood was loosely adjusted over the hemlet, deeply laced upon its verges and seams, and so long as to sweep the ground behind. A dagger of rich materials ornamented a girdle of curious goldsmith's work, and was the only offensive weapon which, notwithstanding her military occupation, she bore upon this occasion.

The toilet, as modern times would say, of the Countess was not nearly so soon ended as that of Count Robert, who occupied his time, as husbands of every period are apt to do, in little sub-acid complaints, between jest and earnest upon the dilatory nature of ladies, and the time which they lose in doffing and donning their garments. But when the Countess Brenhilda came forth in the pride of loveliness from the inner chamber where she had attired herself, her husband, who was still her lover, clasped her to his breast, and expressed his privilege by the kiss which he took as of right from a creature so beautiful. Chiding him for his folly, yet almost returning the kiss which she received, Brenhilda began now to wonder how they were to find their way to the presence of the Emperor.

The query was soon solved, for a gentle knock at the door announced Agelastes, to whom, as best acquainted with the Frankish manners, had been committed by the Emperor the charge of introducing the noble strangers. A distant sound, like that of the roaring of a lion, or not unsimilar to a large

and deep gong of modern times, intimated the commencement of the ceremonial. The black slaves upon guard, who, as hath been observed, were in small numbers, stood ranged in their state dresses of white and gold, bearing in one hand a naked saber, and in the other a torch of white wax, which served to guide the Count and Countess through the passages that led to the interior of the palace, and to the most secret hall of audience.

The door of this *sanctum sanctorum* was lower than usual, a simple stratagem devised by some superstitious officer of the imperial household to compel the lofty-crested Frank to lower his body as he presented himself in the imperial presence. Robert, when the door flew open, and he discovered in the background the Emperor seated upon his throne amidst a glare of light, which was broken and reflected in ten thousandfold by the jewels with which his vestments were covered, stopped short, and demanded the meaning of introducing him through so low an arch? Agelastes pointed to the Emperor, by way of shifting from himself a question which he could not have answered. The mute, to apologize for his silence, yawned, and showed the loss of his tongue.

"Holy Virgin!" said the Countess, "what can these unhappy Africans have done, to have deserved a condemnation which involves so cruel a fate?"

"The hour of retribution is perhaps come," said the Count, in a displeased tone, while Agelastes, with such hurry as time and place permitted, entered, making his prostrations and genuflexions, little doubting that the Frank must follow him, and to do so must lower his body to the Emperor. The Count, however, in the height of displeasure at the trick which he conceived had been intended him, turned himself round and entered the presence-chamber with his back purposely turned to the sovereign, and did not face Alexius until he reached the middle of the apartment, when he was joined by the Countess, who had made her approach in a more seemly manner. The Emperor, who had prepared to acknowledge the Count's expected homage in the most gracious manner, found himself now even more unpleasantly circumstanced than when this uncompromising Frank had usurped the royal throne in the course of the day.

The officers and nobles who stood around, though a very select number, were more numerous than usual, as the meeting was not held for counsel, but merely for state. These

assumed such an appearance of mingled displeasure and confusion as might best suit with the perplexity of Alexius, while the wily features of the Norman-Italian, Bohemond of Tarentum, who was also present, had a singular mixture of fantastical glee and derision. It is the misfortune of the weaker on such occasions, or at least the more timid, to be obliged to take the petty part of winking hard, as if not able to see what they cannot avenge.

Alexius made the signal that the ceremonial of the grand reception should immediately commence. Instantly the lions of Solomon, which had been newly furbished, raised their heads, erected their manes, brandished their tails, until they excited the imagination of Count Robert, who, being already on fire at the circumstances of his reception, conceived the bellowing of these automata to be the actual annunciation of immediate assault. Whether the lions whose forms he beheld were actually lords of the forest, whether they were mortals who had suffered transformation, whether they were productions of the skill of an artful juggler or profound naturalist, the Count neither knew nor cared. All that he thought of the danger was, that it was worthy of his courage; nor did his heart permit him a moment's irresolution. He strode to the nearest lion, which seemed in the act of springing up, and said, in a tone loud and formidable as its own, "How now, dog!" At the same time he struck the figure with his clenched fist and steel gauntlet with so much force that its head burst, and the steps and carpet of the throne were covered with wheels, springs, and other machinery, which had been the means of producing its mimic terrors.

On this display of the real nature of the cause of his anger, Count Robert could not but feel a little ashamed of having given way to passion on such an occasion. He was still more confused when Bohemond, descending from his station near the Emperor, addressed him in the Frank language—"You have done a gallant deed, truly, Count Robert, in freeing the court of Byzantium from an object of fear which has long been used to frighten peevish children and unruly barbarians!"

Enthusiasm has no greater enemy than ridicule. "Why, then," said Count Robert, blushing deeply at the same time, "did they exhibit its fantastic terrors to me? I am neither child nor barbarian."

"Address yourself to the Emperor, then, as an intelligent man," answered Bohemond. "Say something to him in

excuse of your conduct, and show that our bravery has not entirely run away with our common sense. And hark you also, while I have a moment's speech of you: do you and your wife heedfully follow my example at supper." These words were spoken with a significant tone and corresponding look.

The opinion of Bohemond, from his long intercourse, both in peace and war, with the Grecian Emperor, gave him great influence with the other crusaders, and Count Robert yielded to his advice. He turned towards the Emperor with something liker an obeisance than he had hitherto paid. "I crave your pardon," he said "for breaking that gilded piece of pageantry; but, in sooth, the wonders of sorcery and the portents of accomplished and skilful jugglers are so numerous in this country that one does not clearly distinguish what is true from what is false, or what is real from what is illusory."

The Emperor, notwithstanding the presence of mind for which he was remarkable, and the courage in which he was not held by his countrymen to be deficient, received this apology somewhat awkwardly. Perhaps the rueful complaisance with which he accepted the Count's apology might be best compared to that of a lady of the present day when an awkward guest has broken a valuable piece of china. He muttered something about the machines having been long preserved in the imperial family, as being made on the model of those which guarded the throne of the wise king of Israel; to which the blunt, plain-spoken Count expressed his doubt in reply, whether the wisest prince in the world ever condescended to frighten his subjects or guests by the mimic roarings of a wooden lion. "If," said he, "I too hastily took it for a living creature, I have had the worst, by damaging my excellent gauntlet in dashing to pieces its timber skull."

The Emperor, after a little more had been said, chiefly on the same subject, proposed that they should pass to the banquet-room. Marshaled, accordingly, by the grand sewer of the imperial table, and attended by all present, excepting the Emperor and the immediate members of his family, the Frankish guests were guided through a labyrinth of apartments, each of which was filled with wonders of nature and art, calculated to enhance their opinion of the wealth and grandeur which had assembled together so much that was wonderful. Their passage, being necessarily slow and interrupted, gave the Emperor time to change his dress,

according to the ritual of his court, which did not permit his appearing twice in the same vesture before the same spectators. He took the opportunity to summon Agelastes into his presence, and, that their conference might be secret, he used, in assisting his toilet, the agency of some of the mutes destined for the service of the interior.

The temper of Alexius Comnenus was considerably moved, although it was one of the peculiarities of his situation to be ever under the necessity of disguising the emotions of his mind, and of affecting, in presence of his subjects, a superiority to human passion which he was far from feeling. It was therefore with gravity, and even reprehension, that he asked, "By whose error it was that the wily Bohemond, half-Italian and half-Norman, was present at this interview? Surely, if there be one in the crusading army likely to conduct that foolish youth and his wife behind the scenes of the exhibition by which we hoped to impose upon them, the Count of Tarentum, as he entitles himself, is that person."

"It was that old man," said Agelastes, "if I may reply and live—Michael Cantacuzene, who deemed that his presence was peculiarly desired: but he returns to the camp this very night."

"Yes," said Alexius, "to inform Godfrey and the rest of the crusaders that one of the boldest and most highly esteemed of their number is left, with his wife, a hostage in our imperial city, and to bring back, perhaps, an alternative of instant war, unless they are delivered up!"

"If it is your Imperial Highness's will to think so," said Agelastes, "you can suffer Count Robert and his wife to return to the camp with the Italian-Norman."

"What!" answered the Emperor, "and so lose all the fruits of an enterprise the preparations for which have already cost us so much in actual expense; and, were our heart made of the same stuff with that of ordinary mortals, would have cost us so much more in vexation and anxiety? No—no; issue warning to the crusaders who are still on the hither side that farther rendering of homage is dispensed with, and that they repair to the quays on the banks of the Bosphorus by peep of light to-morrow. Let our admiral, as he values his head, pass every man of them over to the farther side before noon. Let there be largesses, a princely banquet on the farther bank—all that may increase their anxiety to pass. Then, Agelastes, we will trust to ourselves to meet this additional danger, either by bribing the venality of Bohemond or by bidding defiance to the crusaders. Their forces are scattered, and the chief of them, with the

leaders themselves, are all now—or by far the greater part—on the east side of the Bosphorus. And now to the banquet, seeing that the change of dress has been made sufficient to answer the statutes of the household, since our ancestors chose to make rules for exhibiting us to our subjects as priests exhibit their images at their shrines."

"Under grant of life," said Agelastes, "it was not done inconsiderately, but in order that the emperor, ruled ever by the same laws from father to son, might ever be regarded as something beyond the common laws of humanity—the divine image of a saint, therefore, rather than a human being."

"We know it, good Agelastes," answered the Emperor, with a smile, "and we are also aware that many of our subjects, like the worshipers of Bel in Holy Writ, treat us so far as an image as to assist us in devouring the revenues of our provinces, which are gathered in our name and for our use. These things we now only touch lightly, the time not suiting them."

Alexius left the secret council accordingly, after the order for the passage of the crusaders had been written out and subscribed in due form, and in the sacred ink of the imperial chancery.

Meantime, the rest of the company had arrived in a hall which, like the other apartments in the palace, was most tastefully as well as gorgeously fitted up, except that a table, which presented a princely banquet, might have been deemed faulty in this respect, that the dishes, which were most splendid, both in the materials of which they were composed and in the viands which they held, were elevated by means of feet, so as to be upon a level with female guests as they sat, and with men as they lay recumbent, at the banquet which it offered.

Around stood a number of black slaves richly attired, while the grand sewer, Michael Cantacuzene, arranged the strangers with his golden wand, and conveyed orders to them, by signs, that all should remain standing around the table until a signal should be given.

The upper end of the board, thus furnished and thus surrounded, was hidden by a curtain of muslin and silver, which fell from the top of the arch under which the upper part seemed to pass. On this curtain the sewer kept a wary eye; and when he observed it slightly shake, he waved his wand of office, and all expected the result.

As if self-moved, the mystic curtain arose, and discovered behind it a throne eight steps higher than the end of the table, decorated in the most magnificent manner, and having placed before it a small table of ivory inlaid with silver,

behind which was seated Alexius Comnenus, in a dress entirely different from what he had worn in the course of the day, and so much more gorgeous than his former vestments, that it seemed not unnatural that his subjects should prostrate themselves before a figure so splendid. His wife, his daughter, and his son-in-law the Cæsar stood behind him with faces bent to the ground, and it was with deep humility that, descending from the throne at the Emperor's command, they mingled with the guests of the lower table, and, exalted as they were, proceeded to the festive board at the signal of the grand sewer ; so that they could not be said to partake of the repast with the Emperor nor to be placed at the imperial table, although they supped in his presence, and were encouraged by his repeated request to them to make good cheer. No dishes presented at the lower table were offered at the higher ; but wines and more delicate sorts of food, which arose before the Emperor as if by magic, and seemed designed for his own proper use, were repeatedly sent, by his special directions, to one or other of the guests whom Alexius delighted to honor, among these the Franks being particularly distinguished.

The behavior of Bohemond was on this occasion particularly remarkable.

Count Robert, who kept an eye upon him, both from his recent words and owing to an expressive look which he once or twice darted towards him, observed, that in no liquors or food, not even those sent from the Emperor's own table, did this astucious prince choose to indulge. A piece of bread, taken from the canister at random, and a glass of pure water was the only refreshment of which he was pleased to partake. His alleged excuse was the veneration due to the Holy Festival of the Advent, which chanced to occur that very night, and which both the Greek and Latin rule agreed to hold sacred.

" I had not expected this of you, Sir Bohemond," said the Emperor, " that you should have refused my personal hospitality at my own board, on the very day on which you honored me by entering into my service as vassal for the principality of Antioch."

" Antioch is not yet conquered," said Sir Bohemond ; " and conscience, dread sovereign, must always have its exceptions in whatever temporal contracts we may engage."

" Come, gentle count," said the Emperor, who obviously regarded Bohemond's inhospitable humor as something arising more from suspicion than devotion, " we invite, though it is not our custom, our children, our noble guests, and our principal officers here present to a general carouse. Fill the

cups called the Nine Muses ; let them be brimful of the wine which is said to be sacred to the imperial lips."

At the Emperor's command the cups were filled ; they were of pure gold, and there was richly engraved upon each the effigy of the Muse to whom it was dedicated.

"You at least," said the Emperor, "my gentle Count Robert—you and your lovely lady, will not have any scruple to pledge your imperial host ?"

"If that scruple is to imply suspicion of the provisions with which we are here served, I disdain to nourish such," said Count Robert. "If it is a sin which I commit by tasting wine to-night, it is a venial one ; nor shall I greatly augment my load by carrying it, with the rest of my trespasses, to the next confessional."

"Will you then, Prince Bohemond, not be ruled by the conduct of your friend ?" said the Emperor.

"Methinks," replied the Norman-Italian, "my friend might have done better to have been ruled by mine ; but be it as his wisdom pleases. The flavor of such exquisite wine is sufficient for me."

So saying, he emptied the wine into another goblet, and seemed alternately to admire the carving of the cup and the flavor of what it had lately contained.

"You are right, Sir Bohemond," said the Emperor, "the fabric of that cup is beautiful ; it was done by one of the ancient gravers of Greece. The boasted cup of Nestor, which Homer has handed down to us, was a good deal larger perhaps, but neither equaled these in the value of the material nor the exquisite beauty of the workmanship. Let each one, therefore, of my stranger guests accept of the cup which he either has or might have drunk out of, as a recollection of me ; and may the expedition against the infidels be as propitious as their confidence and courage deserve !"

"If I accept your gift, mighty emperor," said Bohemond, "it is only to atone for the apparent discourtesy, when my devotion compels me to decline your imperial pledge, and to show you that we part on the most intimate terms of friendship."

So saying, he bowed deeply to the Emperor, who answered him with a smile, into which was thrown a considerable portion of sarcastic expression.

"And I," said the Count of Paris, "having taken upon my conscience the fault of meeting your imperial pledge, may stand excused from incurring the blame of aiding to dismantle your table of these curious drinking-cups. We

empty them to your health, and we cannot in any other respect profit by them."

"But Prince Bohemond can," said the Emperor; "to whose quarters they shall be carried, sanctioned by your generous use. And we have still a set for you, and for your lovely countess, equal to that of the Graces, though no longer matching in number the nymphs of Parnassus. The evening bell rings, and calls us to remember the hour of rest, that we may be ready to meet the labors of to-morrow."

The party then broke up for the evening. Bohemond left the palace that night, not forgetting the Muses, of whom he was not in general a devotee. The result was, as the wily Greek had intended, that he had established between Bohemond and the Count, not indeed a quarrel, but a kind of difference of opinion, Bohemond feeling that the fiery Count of Paris must think his conduct sordid and avaricious, while Count Robert was far less inclined than before to rely on him as a counselor.

CHAPTER XV

THE Count of Paris and his lady were that night lodged in the Imperial Palace of Blacquernal. Their apartments were contiguous, but the communication between them was cut off for the night by the mutual door being locked and barred. They marveled somewhat at this precaution. The observance, however, of the festival of the church was pleaded as an admissible, and not unnatural, excuse for this extraordinary circumstance. Neither the Count nor his lady entertained, it may be believed, the slightest personal fear for anything which could happen to them. Their attendants, Marcian and Agatha, having assisted their master and mistress in the performance of their usual offices, left them, in order to seek the places of repose assigned to them among persons of their degree.

The preceding day had been one of excitation, and of much bustle and interest; perhaps, also, the wine, sacred to the imperial lips, of which Count Robert had taken a single, indeed, but a deep draught, was more potent than the delicate and high-flavored juice of the Gascogne grape, to which he was accustomed; at any rate, it seemed to him that, from the time he felt that he had slept, daylight ought to have been broad in his chamber when he awaked, and yet it was still darkness almost palpable. Somewhat surprised, he gazed eagerly around, but could discern nothing, except two balls of red light which shone from among the darkness with a self-emitted brilliancy, like the eyes of a wild animal while it glares upon its prey. The Count started from bed to put on his armor, a necessary precaution if what he saw should really be a wild creature and at liberty; but the instant he stirred, a deep growl was uttered, such as the Count had never heard, but which might be compared to the sound of a thousand monsters at once; and, as the symphony, was heard the clash of iron chains, and the springing of a monstrous creature towards the bedside, which appeared, however, to be withheld by some fastening from attaining the end of its bound. The roars which it uttered now ran thick on each other. They were most tremendous, and must have been heard

throughout the whole palace. The creature seemed to gather itself many yards nearer to the bed than by its glaring eyeballs it appeared at first to be stationed, and how much nearer, or what degree of motion might place him within the monster's reach, the Count was totally uncertain. Its breathing was even heard, and Count Robert thought he felt the heat of its respiration, while his defenseless limbs might not be two yards distant from the fangs which he heard grinding against each other, and the claws which tore up fragments of wood from the oaken floor. The Count of Paris was one of the bravest men who lived in a time when bravery was the universal property of all who claimed a drop of noble blood, and the knight was a descendant of Charlemagne. He was, however, a man, and therefore cannot be said to have endured unappalled a sense of danger so unexpected and so extraordinary. But his was not a sudden alarm or panic; it was a calm sense of extreme peril, qualified by a resolution to exert his faculties to the uttermost, to save his life if it were possible. He withdrew himself within the bed, no longer a place of rest, being thus a few feet further from the two glaring eyeballs which remained so closely fixed upon him that, in spite of his courage, nature painfully suggested the bitter imagination of his limbs being mangled, torn, and churned with their life-blood, in the jaws of some monstrous beast of prey. One saving thought alone presented itself: this might be a trial, an experiment of the philosopher Agelastes, or of the Emperor his master, for the purpose of proving the courage of which the Christians vaunted so highly, and punishing the thoughtless insult which the Count had been unadvised enough to put upon the Emperor the preceding day.

"Well is it said," he reflected in his agony, "beard not the lion in his den. Perhaps even now some base slave deliberates whether I have yet tasted enough of the preliminary agonies of death, and whether he shall yet slip the chain which keeps the savage from doing his work. But come death when it will, it shall never be said that Count Robert was heard to receive it with prayers for compassion or with cries of pain or terror." He turned his face to the wall, and waited, with a strong mental exertion, the death which he conceived to be fast approaching.

His first feelings had been unavoidably of a selfish nature. The danger was too instant, and of a description too horrible, to admit of any which involved a more comprehensive view of his calamity; and other reflections of a more distant

kind were at first swallowed up in the all-engrossing thought of immediate death. But as his ideas became clearer, the safety of his countess rushed upon his mind—what might she now be suffering! and, while he was subjected to a trial so extraordinary, for what were her weaker frame and female courage reserved? Was she still within a few yards of him, as when he lay down the last night? or had the barbarians, who had devised for him a scene so cruel, availed themselves of his and his lady's incautious confidence to inflict upon her some villainy of the same kind, or even yet more perfidious? Did she sleep or wake, or could she sleep within the close hearing of that horrible cry, which shook all around? He resolved to utter her name, warning her, if possible, to be upon her guard, and to answer without venturing rashly into the apartment which contained a guest so horribly perilous.

He uttered, therefore, his wife's name, but in trembling accents, as if he had been afraid of the savage beast overhearing him.

"Brenhilda—Brenhilda, there is danger; awake and speak to me, but do not arise." There was no answer. "What am I become," he said to himself, "that I call upon Brenhilda of Aspramonte, like a child on its sleeping nurse, and all because there is a wild cat in the same room with me? Shame on thee, Count of Paris! Let thy arms be rent and thy spurs be hacked from thy heels! What ho!" he cried aloud, but still with a tremulous voice, "Brenhilda, we are beset: the foe are upon us. Answer me, but stir not."

A deep growl from the monster which garrisoned his apartment was the only answer. The sound seemed to say, "Thou hast no hope;" and it ran to the knight's bosom as the genuine expression of despair.

"Perhaps, however, I am still too cold in making my misery known. What, ho! my love—Brenhilda!"

A voice, hollow and disconsolate as that which might have served an inhabitant of the grave, answered as if from a distance. "What disconsolate wretch art thou, who expectest that the living can answer thee from the habitations of the dead?"

"I am a Christian man, a free noble of the kingdom of France," answered the Count,—"yesterday the captain of five hundred men, the bravest in France—the bravest, that is, who breathe mortal air—and I am here without a glimpse of light to direct me how to avoid the corner in which lies a wild tiger-cat, prompt to spring upon and to devour me."

"Thou art an example," replied the voice, "and wilt not long be the last, of the changes of fortune. I, who am now suffering in my third year, was that mighty Ursel who rivaled Alexius Comnenus for the crown of Greece, was betrayed by my confederates, and being deprived of that eyesight which is the chief blessing of humanity, I inhabit these vaults, no distant neighbor of the wild animals by whom they are sometimes occupied, and whose cries of joy I hear when unfortunate victims like thyself are delivered up to their fury."

"Didst thou not then hear," said Count Robert, in return, "a warlike guest and his bride conducted hither last night, with sounds as it might seem of bridal music? O, Brenhilda! hast thou, so young, so beautiful, been so treacherously done to death by means so unutterably horrible?"

"Think not," answered Ursel, as the voice had called its owner, "that the Greeks pamper their wild beasts on such lordly fare. For their enemies, which term includes not only all that are really such, but all those whom they fear or hate, they have dungeons whose locks never revolve; hot instruments of steel, to sear the eyeballs in the head; lions and tigers, when it pleases them to make a speedy end of their captives—but these are only for the male prisoners. While for the women, if they be young and beautiful, the princes of the land have places in their bed and bower; nor are they employed, like the captives of Agamemnon's host, to draw water from an Argive spring, but are admired and adored by those whom fate has made the lords of their destiny."

"Such shall never be the doom of Brenhilda," exclaimed Count Robert: "her husband still lives to assist her, and should he die, she knows well how to follow him without leaving a blot in the epitaph of either."

The captive did not immediately reply, and a short pause ensued, which was broken by Ursel's voice. "Stranger," he said, "what noise is that I hear?"

"Nay, I hear nothing," said Count Robert.

"But I do," said Ursel. "The cruel deprivation of my eyesight renders my other senses more acute."

"Disquiet not thyself about the matter, fellow-prisoner," answered the Count, "but wait the event in silence."

Suddenly a light arose in the apartment, lurid, red, and smoky. The knight had bethought him of a flint and match which he usually carried about him, and with as little noise as possible had lighted the torch by the bedside;

this he instantly applied to the curtains of his bed, which, being of thin muslin, were in a moment in flames. The knight sprung at the same instant from the bed. The tiger, for such it was, terrified at the flame, leaped backwards as far as his chain would permit, heedless of anything save this new object of terror. Count Robert upon this seized on a massive wooden stool, which was the only offensive weapon on which he could lay his hand, and, marking at those eyes which now reflected the blaze of fire, and which had recently seemed so appalling, he discharged against them this fragment of ponderous oak, with a force which less resembled human strength than the impetus with which an engine hurls a stone. He had employed his instant of time so well, and his aim was so true, that the missile went right to the mark and with incredible force. The skull of the tiger, which might be, perhaps, somewhat exaggerated if described as being of the very largest size, was fractured by the blow, and with the assistance of his dagger, which had fortunately been left with him, the French count despatched the monster, and had the satisfaction to see him grin his last, and roll, in the agony of death, those eyes which were lately so formidable.

Looking around him, he discovered, by the light of the fire which he had raised, that the apartment in which he now lay was different from that in which he had gone to bed overnight; nor could there be a stronger contrast between the furniture of both than the flickering, half-burnt remains of the thin muslin curtains, and the strong, bare, dungeon-looking walls of the room itself, or the very serviceable wooden stool, of which he had made such good use.

The knight had no leisure to form conclusions upon such a subject. He hastily extinguished the fire, which had, indeed, nothing that it could lay hold of, and proceeded, by the light of the flambeau, to examine the apartment and its means of entrance. It is scarce necessary to say, that he saw no communication with the room of Brenhilda, which convinced him that they had been separated the evening before, under pretense of devotional scruples, in order to accomplish some most villainous design upon one or both of them. His own part of the night's adventure we have already seen; and success so far, over so formidable a danger, gave him a trembling hope that Brenhilda, by her own worth and valor, would be able to defend herself against all attacks of fraud or force until he could find his way to her rescue. "I should have paid more regard," he

said, "to Bohemond's caution last night, who, I think, intimated to me as plainly as if he had spoke it in direct terms that that same cup of wine was a drugged potion. But then, fie upon him for an avaricious hound! how was it possible I should think he suspected any such thing, when he spoke not out like a man, but, for sheer coldness of heart or base self-interest, suffered me to run the risk of being poisoned by the wily despot?"

Here he heard a voice from the same quarter as before. "Ho, there! Ho, stranger! Do you live, or have you been murdered? What means this stifling smell of smoke? For God's sake, answer him who can receive no information from eyes closed, alas, forever!"

"I am at liberty," said the Count, "and the monster destined to devour me has groaned its last. I would, my friend Ursel, since such is thy name, thou hadst the advantage of thine eyes, to have borne witness to yonder combat; it had been worth thy while, though thou shouldst have lost them in a minute afterwards, and it would have greatly advantaged whoever shall have the task of compiling my history."

While he gave a thought to that vanity which strongly ruled him, he lost no time in seeking some mode of escape from the dungeon, for by that means only might he hope to recover his countess. At last he found an entrance in the wall, but it was strongly locked and bolted. "I have found the passage," he called out; "and its direction is the same in which thy voice is heard. But how shall I undo the door?"

"I'll teach thee that secret," said Ursel. "I would I could as easily unlock each bolt that withholds us from the open air; but as for thy seclusion within the dungeon, heave up the door by main strength, and thou shalt lift the locks to a place where, pushing then the door from thee, the fastenings will find a grooved passage in the wall, and the door itself will open. Would that I could indeed see thee, not only because, being a gallant man, thou must be a goodly sight, but also because I should thereby know that I was not caverned in darkness forever."

While he spoke thus, the Count made a bundle of his armor, from which he missed nothing except his sword, Tranchefer, and then proceeded to try what efforts he could make, according to the blind man's instructions, to open the door of his prison-house. Pushing in a direct line was, he soon found, attended with no effect; but when he applied

his gigantic strength, and raised the door as high as it would go, he had the satisfaction to find that the bolts yielded, though reluctantly. A space had been cut so as to allow them to move out of the socket into which they had been forced; and without the turn of a key, but by a powerful thrust forwards, a small passage was left open. The knight entered, bearing his armor in his hand.

"I hear thee," said Ursel, "O stranger! and am aware thou art come into my place of captivity. For three years have I been employed in cutting these grooves, corresponding to the sockets which hold these iron bolts, and preserving the knowledge of the secret from the prison-keepers. Twenty such bolts, perhaps, must be sawn through ere my steps shall approach the upper air. What prospect is there that I shall have strength of mind sufficient to continue the task? Yet, credit me, noble stranger, I rejoice in having been thus far aiding to thy deliverance; for if Heaven blesses not, in any farther degree, our aspirations after freedom, we may still be a comfort to each other, while tyranny permits our mutual life."

Count Robert looked around, and shuddered that a human being should talk of anything approaching to comfort connected with his residence in what seemed a living tomb. Ursel's dungeon was not above twelve feet square, vaulted in the roof, and strongly built in the walls by stones which the chisel had mortised closely together. A bed, a coarse footstool, like that which Robert had just launched at the head of the tiger, and a table of equally massive materials, were its only articles of furniture. On a long stone above the bed were these few, but terrible, words:—"Zedekias Ursel, imprisoned here on the Ides of March, A.D. ——. Died and interred on the spot ——." A blank was left for filling up the period. The figure of the captive could hardly be discerned amid the wildness of his dress and dishabille. The hair of his head, uncut and uncombed, descended in elf-locks, and mingled with a beard of extravagant length.

"Look on me," said the captive, "and rejoice that thou canst yet see the wretched condition to which iron-hearted tyranny can reduce a fellow-creature, both in mortal existence and in future hope."

"Was it thou," said Count Robert, whose blood ran cold in his veins, "that hadst the heart to spend thy time in sawing through the blocks of stone by which these bolts are secured?"

"Alas!" said Ursel, "what could a blind man do? Busy

I must be, if I would preserve my senses. Great as the labor was, it was to me the task of three years ; nor can you wonder that I should have devoted to it my whole time, when I had no other means of occupying it. Perhaps, and most likely, my dungeon does not admit the distinction of day and night ; but a distant cathedral clock told me how hour after hour fled away, and found me expending them in rubbing one stone against another. But when the door gave way, I found I had only cut an access into a prison more strong than that which held me. I rejoice, nevertheless, since it has brought us together, given thee an entrance to my dungeon, and me a companion in my misery."

"Think better than that," said Count Robert—"think of liberty—think of revenge. I cannot believe such unjust treachery will end successfully, else needs must I say the Heavens are less just than priests tell us of. How art thou supplied with food in this dungeon of thine ?"

"A warder," said Ursel, "and who, I think, understands not the Greek language—at least he never either answers or addresses me—brings a loaf and a pitcher of water, enough to supply my miserable life till two days are past. I must, therefore, pray that you will retire for a space into the next prison, so that the warder may have no means of knowing that we can hold correspondence together."

"I see not," said Count Robert, "by what access the barbarian, if he is one, can enter my dungeon without passing through yours ; but no matter, I will retire into the inner or outer room, whichever it happens to be, and be thou then well aware that the warder will have some one to grapple with ere he leaves his prison-work to-day. Meanwhile, think thyself dumb as thou art blind, and be assured that the offer of freedom itself would not induce me to desert the cause of a companion in adversity."

"Alas," said the old man, "I listen to thy promises as I should to those of the morning gale, which tells me that the sun is about to arise, although I know that I at least shall never behold it. Thou art one of those wild and undespairing knights whom for so many years the west of Europe hath sent forth to attempt impossibilities, and from thee, therefore, I can only hope for such a fabric of relief as an idle boy would blow out of soap bubbles."

"Think better of us, old man," said Count Robert, retiring ; "at least let me die with my blood warm, and believing it possible for me to be once more united to my beloved Brenhilda."

So saying, he retired into his own cell, and replaced the door, so that the operations of Ursel, which indeed were only such as three years' solitude could have achieved, should escape observation when again visited by the warder. "It is ill luck," said he, when once more within his own prison —for that in which the tiger had been secured he instinctively concluded to be destined for him—"it is ill luck that I had not found a young and able fellow-captive, instead of one decrepit by imprisonment, blind, and broken down past exertion. But God's will be done! I will not leave behind me the poor wretch whom I have found in such a condition, though he is perfectly unable to assist me in accomplishing my escape, and is rather more likely to retard it. Meantime, before we put out the torch, let us see if, by close examination, we can discover any door in the wall save that to the blind man's dungeon. If not, I much suspect that my descent has been made through the roof. That cup of wine—that Muse, as they called it—had a taste more like medicine than merry companions' pledge."

He began accordingly a strict survey of the walls, which he resolved to conclude by extinguishing the torch, that he might take the person who should enter his dungeon darkling and by surprise. For a similar reason he dragged into the darkest corner the carcass of the tiger, and covered it with the remains of the bedclothes, swearing, at the same time, that a half tiger should be his crest in future, if he had the fortune, which his bold heart would not suffer him to doubt, of getting through the present danger. "But," he added, "if these necromantic vassals of hell shall raise the devil upon me, what shall I do then? And so great is the chance that methinks I would fain dispense with extinguishing the flambeau. Yet it is childish for one dubbed in the chapel of Our Lady of the Broken Lances to make much difference between a light room and a dark one. Let them come, as many fiends as the cell can hold, and we shall see if we receive them not as becomes a Christian knight; and surely Our Lady, to whom I was ever a true votary, will hold it an acceptable sacrifice that I tore myself from my Brenhilda, even for a single moment, in honor of her Advent, and thus led the way for our woful separation. Fiends! I defy ye in the body as in the spirit, and I retain the remains of this flambeau until some more convenient opportunity." He dashed it against the wall as he spoke, and then quietly sat down in a corner to watch what should next happen.

Thought after thought chased each other through his

mind. His confidence in his wife's fidelity, and his trust in her uncommon strength and activity, were the greatest comforts which he had; nor could her danger present itself to him in any shape so terrible, but that he found consolation in these reflections: "She is pure," he said, "as the dew of heaven, and Heaven will not abandon its own."

CHAPTER XVI

Strange ape of man! who loathes thee while he scorns thee;
Half a reproach to us and half a jest.
What fancies can be ours ere we have pleasure
In viewing our own form, our pride and passions,
Reflected in a shape grotesque as thine?

Anonymous.

COUNT ROBERT OF PARIS, having ensconced himself behind the ruins of the bed, so that he could not well be observed, unless a strong light was at once flung upon the place of his retreat, waited with anxiety how and in what manner the warder of the dungeon, charged with the task of bringing food to the prisoners, should make himself visible; nor was it long ere symptoms of his approach began to be heard and observed.

A light was partially seen, as from a trap-door opening in the roof, and a voice was heard to utter these words in Anglo-Saxon, "Leap, sirrah; come, no delay; leap, my good Sylvan, show your honor's activity." A strange, chuckling, hoarse voice, in a language totally unintelligible to Count Robert, was heard to respond, as if disputing the orders which were received.

"What, sir," said his companion, "you must contest the point, must you? Nay, if thou art so lazy, I must give your honor a ladder, and perhaps a kick, to hasten your journey." Something then, of very great size, in the form of a human being, jumped down from the trap-door, though the height might be above fourteen feet. This figure was gigantic, being upwards of seven feet high. In its left hand it held a torch, and in its right a skein of fine silk, which, unwinding itself as it descended, remained unbroken, though it was easy to conceive it could not have afforded a creature so large any support in his descent from the roof. He alighted with perfect safety and activity upon his feet, and, as if rebounding from the floor, he sprung upwards again, so as almost to touch the roof. In this last gambaud the torch which he bore was extinguished; but this extraordinary warder whirled it round his head with infinite velocity, so

that it again ignited. The bearer, who appeared to intend the accomplishment of this object, endeavored to satisfy himself that it was really attained by approaching, as if cautiously, its left hand to the flame of the torch. This practical experiment seemed attended with consequences which the creature had not expected, for it howled with pain, shaking the burnt hand, and chattering as if bemoaning itself.

"Take heed there, Sylvanus," said the same voice in Anglo-Saxon, and in a tone of rebuke. "Ho, there! mind thy duty, Sylvan. Carry food to the blind man, and stand not there to play thyself, lest I trust thee not again alone on such an errand."

The creature—for it would have been rash to have termed it a man—turning its eyes upwards to the place from whence the voice came, answered with a dreadful grin and shaking of its fist, yet presently began to undo a parcel, and rummage in the pockets of a sort of jerkin and pantaloons which it wore, seeking, it appeared, a bunch of keys, which at length it produced, while it took from the pocket a loaf of bread. Heating the stone of the wall, it affixed the torch to it by a piece of wax, and then cautiously looked out for the entrance to the old man's dungeon, which it opened with a key selected from the bunch. Within the passage it seemed to look for and discover the handle of a pump, at which it filled a pitcher that it bore, and bringing back the fragments of the former loaf, and remains of the pitcher of water, it eat a little, as if it were in sport, and very soon, making a frightful grimace, flung the fragments away. The Count of Paris, in the mean while, watched anxiously the proceedings of this unknown animal. His first thought was, that the creature, whose limbs were so much larger than humanity, whose grimaces were so frightful, and whose activity seemed supernatural, could be no other than the Devil himself, or some of his imps, whose situation and office in those gloomy regions seemed by no means hard to conjecture. The human voice, however, which he had heard was less that of a necromancer conjuring a fiend than that of a person giving commands to a wild animal, over whom he had, by training, obtained a great superiority.

"A shame on it," said the Count, "if I suffer a common jackanapes—for such I take this devil-seeming beast to be, although twice as large as any of its fellows whom I have ever seen—to throw an obstacle in the way of my obtaining daylight and freedom! Let us but watch, and the chance

is that we make that furry gentleman our guide to the upper regions."

Meantime the creature, which rummaged about every where, at length discovered the body of the tiger, touched it, stirred it, with many strange motions, and seemed to lament and wonder at its death. At once it seemed struck with the idea that some one must have slain it, and Count Robert had the mortification to see it once more select the key, and spring towards the door of Ursel's prison with such alacrity that, had its intentions been to strangle him, it would have accomplished its purpose before the interference of Count Robert could have prevented its revenge taking place. Apparently, however, it reflected that, for reasons which seemed satisfactory, the death of the tiger could not be caused by the unfortunate Ursel, but had been accomplished by some one concealed within the outer prison.

Slowly grumbling, therefore, and chattering to itself, and peeping anxiously into every corner, the tremendous creature, so like, yet so very unlike, to the human form, came stealing along the walls, moving whatever he thought could seclude a man from his observation. Its extended legs and arms were protruded forward with great strides, and its sharp eyes, on the watch to discover the object of its search, kept prying, with the assistance of the torch, into every corner.

Considering the vicinity of Alexius's collection of animals, the reader, by this time, can have little doubt that the creature in question, whose appearance seemed to the Count of Paris so very problematical, was a specimen of that gigantic species of ape—if it is not indeed some animal more nearly allied to ourselves—to which, I believe, naturalists have given the name of the ourang-outang. This creature differs from the rest of its fraternity, in being comparatively more docile and serviceable; and though possessing the power of imitation which is common to the whole race, yet making use of it less in mere mockery than in the desire of improvement and instruction perfectly unknown to his brethren. The aptitude which it possesses of acquiring information is surprisingly great, and probably, if placed in a favorable situation, it might admit of being domesticated in a considerable degree; but such advantages the ardor of scientific curiosities has never afforded this creature. The last we have heard of was seen, we believe, in the Island of Sumatra; it was of great size and strength, and upwards of seven feet high. It

died defending desperately its innocent life against a party of Europeans, who, we cannot help thinking, might have better employed the superiority which their knowledge gave them over the poor native of the forest. It was probably this creature, seldom seen, but when once seen never forgotten, which occasioned the ancient belief in the god Pan, with his sylvans and satyrs. Nay, but for the gift of speech, which we cannot suppose any of the family to have attained, we should have believed the satyr seen by St. Anthony in the desert to have belonged to this tribe.

We can, therefore, the more easily credit the annals which attest that the collection of natural history belonging to Alexius Comnenus preserved an animal of this kind, which had been domesticated and reclaimed to a surprising extent, and showed a degree of intelligence never perhaps to be attained in any other case. These explanations being premised, we return to the thread of our story.

The animal advanced with long, noiseless steps ; its shadow on the wall, when it held the torch so as to make it visible to the Frank, forming another fiend-resembling mimicry of its own large figure and extravagant-looking members. Count Robert remained in his lurking-hole, in no hurry to begin a strife of which it was impossible to foretell the end. In the meantime, the man of the woods came nigh, and every step by which he approached caused the Count's heart to vibrate almost audibly, at the idea of meeting danger of a nature so strange and new. At length the creature approached the bed, his hideous eyes were fixed on those of the Count ; and, as much surprised at seeing him as Robert was at the meeting, he skipped about fifteen paces backwards at one spring, with a cry of instinctive terror, and then advanced on tiptoe, holding his torch as far forward as he could between him and the object of his fears, as if to examine him at the safest possible distance. Count Robert caught up a fragment of the bedstead, large enough to form a sort of club, with which he menaced the native of the wilds.

Apparently this poor creature's education, like education of most kinds, had not been acquired without blows, of which the recollection was as fresh as that of the lessons which they enforced. Sir Robert of Paris was a man at once to discover and to avail himself of the advantage obtained by finding that he possessed a degree of ascendency over his enemy which he had not suspected. He erected his warlike figure, assumed a step as if triumphant in the lists, and advanced threatening his enemy with his club, as he would have

menaced his antagonist with the redoubtable Tranchefer. The man of the woods, on the other hand, obviously gave way, and converted his cautious advance into a retreat no less cautious. Yet apparently the creature had not renounced some plan of resistance: he chattered in an angry and hostile tone, held out his torch in opposition, and seemed about to strike the crusader with it. Count Robert, however, determined to take his opponent at advantage, while his fears influenced him, and for this purpose resolved, if possible, to deprive him of his natural superiority in strength and agility, which his singular form showed he could not but possess over the human species. A master of his weapon, therefore, the Count menaced his savage antagonist with a stroke on the right side of his head, but suddenly averting the blow, struck him with his whole force on the left temple, and in an instant was kneeling above him, when, drawing his dagger, he was about to deprive him of life.

The ourang-outang, ignorant of the nature of this new weapon with which he was threatened, attempted at one and the same moment to rise from the ground, overthrow his antagonist, and wrench the dagger from his grasp. In the first attempt he would probably have succeeded; and as it was, he gained his knees, and seemed likely to prevail in the struggle, when he became sensible that the knight, drawing his poniard sharply through his grasp, had cut his paw severely, and seeing him aim the trenchant weapon at his throat, became probably aware that his enemy had his life at command. He suffered himself to be borne backwards without further resistance, with a deep wailing and melancholy cry, having in it something human, which excited compassion. He covered his eyes with the unwounded hand, as if he would have hid from his own sight the death which seemed approaching him.

Count Robert, notwithstanding his military frenzy, was, in ordinary matters, a calm-tempered and mild man, and particularly benevolent to the lower classes of creation. The thought rushed through his mind, "Why take from this unfortunate monster the breath which is in its nostrils, after which it cannot know another existence? And then, may it not be some prince or knight changed to this grotesque shape, that it may help to guard these vaults, and the wonderful adventures that attach to them? Should I not, then, be guilty of a crime by slaying him, when he has rendered himself, rescue or no rescue, which he has done as completely as his transformed figure permits; and if he be actually a

bestial creature, may he not have some touch of gratitude? I have heard the minstrels sing the lay of *Androcles and the Lion.* I will be on my guard with him."

So saying, he rose from above the man of the woods, and permitted him also to arise. The creature seemed sensible of the clemency, for he muttered, in a low and supplicating tone, which seemed at once to crave for mercy and to return thanks for what he had already experienced. He wept too, as he saw the blood dropping from his wound, and with an anxious countenance, which had more of the human now that it was composed into an expression of pain and melancholy, seemed to await in terror the doom of a being more powerful than himself.

The pocket which the knight wore under his armor, capable of containing but few things, had, however, some vulnerary balsam, for which its owner had often occasion, a little lint, and a small roll of linen; these the knight took out, and motioned to the animal to hold forth his wounded hand. The man of the woods obeyed with hesitation and reluctance, and Count Robert applied the balsam and the dressings, acquainting his patient, at the same time, in a severe tone of voice, that perhaps he did wrong in putting to his use a balsam compounded for the service of the noblest knights; but that, if he saw the least sign of his making an ungrateful use of the benefit he had conferred, he would bury the dagger, of which he had felt the efficacy, to the very handle in his body.

The sylvan looked fixedly upon Count Robert almost as if he understood the language used to him, and, making one of its native murmurs, it stooped to the earth, kissed the feet of the knight, and embracing his knees, seemed to swear to him eternal gratitude and fidelity. Accordingly, when the Count retired to the bed and assumed his armor, to await the re-opening of the trap-door, the animal sat down by his side, directing its eyes in the line with his, and seemed quietly to wait till the door should open.

After waiting about an hour, a slight noise was heard in the upper chamber, and the wild man plucked the Frank by the cloak, as if to call his attention to what was about to happen. The same voice which had before spoken, was, after a whistle or two, heard to call, "Sylvan—Sylvan, where loiterest thou? Come instantly, or, by the rood, thou shalt abye thy sloth."

The poor monster, as Trinculo might have called him, seemed perfectly aware of the meaning of this threat, and

showed his sense of it by pressing close to the side of Count Robert, making at the same time a kind of whining, entreating, it would seem, the knight's protection. Forgetting the great improbability there was, even in his own opinion, that the creature could understand him, Count Robert said, "Why, my friend, thou hast already learned the principal court prayer of this country, by which men entreat permission to speak and live. Fear nothing, poor creature—I am thy protector."

"Sylvan, what, ho!" said the voice again; "whom hast thou got for a companion? Some of the fiends, or ghosts of murdered men, who they say are frequent in these dungeons? Or dost thou converse with the old blind rebel Grecian? Or, finally, is it true what men say of thee, that thou canst talk intelligibly when thou wilt, and only gibberest and chatterest for fear thou art sent to work? Come, thou lazy rascal, thou shalt have the advantage of the ladder to ascend by, though thou needst it no more than a daw to ascend the steeple of the cathedral of St. Sophia.* Come along, then," he said putting a ladder down the trap-door, "and put me not to the trouble of descending to fetch thee, else, by St. Swithin, it shall be the worse for thee. Come along, therefore, like a good fellow, and for once I shall spare the whip."

The animal, apparently, was moved by this rhetoric, for, with a doleful look, which Count Robert saw by means of the nearly extinguished torch, he seemed to bid him farewell, and to creep away towards the ladder with the same excellent good-will wherewith a condemned criminal performs the like evolution. But no sooner did the Count look angry and shake the formidable dagger than the intelligent animal seemed at once to take his resolution, and clenching his hands firmly together in the fashion of one who has made up his mind, he returned from the ladder's foot, and drew up behind Count Robert, with the air, however, of a deserter, who feels himself but little at home when called into the field against his ancient commander.

In a short time the warder's patience was exhausted, and despairing of the sylvan's voluntary return, he resolved to descend in quest of him. Down the ladder he came, a bundle of keys in one hand, the other assisting his descent, and a sort of dark lantern, whose bottom was so fashioned that he could wear it upon his head like a hat. He had scarce stept on the floor when he was surrounded by the nervous arms of

* Now the chief mosque of the Ottoman capital.

the Count of Paris. At first the warder's idea was that he was seized by the recusant Sylvan.

"How now, villain," he said; "let me go, or thou shalt die the death."

"Thou diest thyself," said the Count, who, between the surprise and his own skill in wrestling, felt fully his advantage in the struggle.

"Treason—treason!" cried the warder, hearing by the voice that a stranger had mingled in the contest. "Help, ho! above there!—help, Hereward—Varangian—Anglo-Saxon, or whatever accursed name thou callest thyself!"

While he spoke thus, the irresistible grasp of Count Robert seized his throat and choked his utterance. They fell heavily, the jailer undermost, upon the floor of the dungeon, and Robert of Paris, the necessity of whose case excused the action, plunged his dagger in the throat of the unfortunate. Just as he did so, a noise of armor was heard, and, rattling down the ladder, our acquaintance Hereward stood on the floor of the dungeon. The light, which had rolled from the head of the warder, continued to show him streaming with blood and in the death-grasp of a stranger. Hereward hesitated not to fly to his assistance, and, seizing upon the Count of Paris at the same advantage which that knight had gained over his own adversary a moment before, held him forcibly down with his face to the earth.

Count Robert was one of the strongest men of that military age, but then so was the Varangian; and, save that the latter had obtained a decided advantage by having his antagonist beneath him, it could not certainly have been conjectured which way the combat was to go.

"Yield, as your own jargon goes, rescue or no rescue," said the Varangian, "or die on the point of my dagger."

"A French count never yields," answered Robert, who began to conjecture with what sort of person he was engaged, "above all to a vagabond slave like thee." With this he made an effort to rise, so sudden, so strong, so powerful, that he had almost freed himself from the Varangian's grasp, had not Hereward, by a violent exertion of his great strength, preserved the advantage he had gained, and raised his poniard to end the strife forever; but a loud, chuckling laugh of an unearthly sound was at this instant heard. The Varangian's extended arm was seized with vigor, while a rough arm, embracing his throat, turned him over on his back, and gave the French count an opportunity of springing up.

"Death to thee, wretch!" said the Varangian, scarce knowing whom he threatened; but the man of the woods apparently had an awful recollection of the prowess of human beings. He fled, therefore, swiftly up the ladder, and left Hereward and his deliverer to fight it out with what success chance might determine between them.

The circumstances seemed to argue a desperate combat. Both were tall, strong, and courageous, both had defensive armor, and the fatal and desperate poniard was their only offensive weapon. They paused facing each other, and examined eagerly into their respective means of defense before hazarding a blow which, if it missed its attaint, would certainly be fatally requitted. During this deadly pause, a gleam shone from the trap-door above, as the wild and alarmed visage of the man of the woods was seen peering down by the light of a newly-kindled torch which he held as low into the dungeon as he well could.

"Fight bravely, comrade," said Count Robert of Paris, "for we no longer battle in private, this respectable person having chosen to constitute himself judge of the field."

Hazardous as his situation was, the Varangian looked up, and was so struck with the wild and terrified expression which the creature had assumed, and the strife between curiosity and terror which its grotesque features exhibited, that he could not help bursting into a fit of laughter.

"Sylvan is among those," said Hereward, "who would rather hold the candle to a dance so formidable than join in it himself."

"Is there, then," said Count Robert, "any absolute necessity that thou and I perform this dance at all?"

"None but our own pleasure," answered Hereward, "for I suspect there is not between us any legitimate cause of quarrel demanding to be fought out in such a place, and before such a spectator. Thou art, if I mistake not, the bold Frank who was yesternight imprisoned in this place with a tiger, chained within no distant spring of his bed?"

"I am," answered the Count.

"And where is the animal who was opposed to thee?"

"He lies yonder," answered the Count, "never again to be the object of more terror than the deer whom he may have preyed on in his day." He pointed to the body of the tiger, which Hereward examined by the light of the dark lantern already mentioned.

"And this, then, was thy handiwork?" said the wondering Anglo-Saxon.

"Sooth to say it was," answered the Count, with indifference.

"And thou hast slain my comrade of this strange watch?" said the Varangian.

"Mortally wounded him at the least," said Count Robert.

"With your patience, I will be beholden to you for a moment's truce, while I examine his wound," said Hereward.

"Assuredly," answered the Count; "blighted be the arm which strikes a foul blow at an open antagonist!"

Without demanding further security, the Varangian quitted his posture of defense and precaution, and set himself, by the assistance of the dark lantern, to examine the wound of the first warder who appeared on the field, who seemed, by his Roman military dress, to be a soldier of the bands called Immortals. He found him in the death-agony, but still able to speak.

"So, Varangian, thou art come at last, and it is to thy sloth or treachery that I am to impute my fate? Nay, answer me not. The stranger struck me over the collarbone; had we lived long together, or met often, I had done the like by thee, to wipe out the memory of certain transactions at the Golden Gate. I know the use of the knife too well to doubt the effect of a blow aimed over the collarbone by so strong a hand—I feel it coming. The Immortal, so called, becomes now, if priests say true, an immortal indeed, and Sebastes of Mitylene's bow is broken ere his quiver is half-emptied."

The robber Greek sunk back in Hereward's arms, and closed his life with a groan, which was the last sound he uttered. The Varangian laid the body at length on the dungeon floor.

"This is a perplexed matter," he said; "I am certainly not called upon to put to death a brave man, although my national enemy, because he hath killed a miscreant who was privately meditating my own murder. Neither is this a place or a light by which to fight as becomes the champions of two nations. Let that quarrel be still for the present. How say you, then, noble sir, if we adjourn the present dispute till we effect your deliverance from the dungeons of the Blacquernal, and your restoration to your own friends and followers? If a poor Varangian should be of service to you in this matter, would you, when it was settled, refuse to meet him in fair fight, with your national weapons or his own?"

"If," said Count Robert, "whether friend or enemy, thou wilt extend thy assistance to my wife, who is also imprisoned somewhere in this inhospitable palace, be assured that, whatever be thy rank, whatever be thy country, whatever be thy condition, Robert of Paris will, at thy choice, proffer thee his right hand in friendship, or raise it against thee in fair and manly battle—a strife not of hatred, but of honor and esteem; and this I vow by the soul of Charlemagne, my ancestor, and by the shrine of my patroness, Our Lady of the Broken Lances."

"Enough said," replied Hereward. "I am as much bound to the assistance of your lady countess, being a poor exile, as if I were the first in the ranks of chivalry; for if anything can make the cause of worth and bravery yet more obligatory, it must be its being united with that of a helpless and suffering female."

"I ought," said Count Robert, "to be here silent, without loading thy generosity with farther requests; yet thou art a man whom, if fortune has not smiled at thy birth, by ordaining thee to be born within the ranks of noblesse and knighthood, yet Providence hath done thee more justice by giving thee a more gallant heart than is always possessed, I fear, by those who are inwoven in the gayest wreath of chivalry. There lingers here in these dungeons—for I cannot say he lives—a blind old man, to whom for three years everything beyond his prison has been a universal blot. His food is bread and water, his intercourse limited to the conversation of a sullen warder, and if death can ever come as a deliverer, it must be to this dark old man. What sayst thou? Shall he, so unutterably miserable, not profit by perhaps the only opportunity of freedom that may ever occur to him?"

"By St. Dunstan," answered the Varangian, "thou keepest over truly the oath thou hast taken as a redresser of wrongs. Thine own case is well-nigh desperate, and thou art willing to make it utterly so by uniting with it that of every unhappy person whom fate throws in thy way."

"The more of human misery we attempt to relieve," said Robert of Paris, "the more we shall carry with us the blessing of our merciful saints and Our Lady of the Broken Lances, who views with so much pain every species of human suffering or misfortune save that which occurs within the inclosure of the lists. But come, valiant Anglo-Saxon, resolve me on my request as speedily as thou canst. There is something in thy face of candor as well as sense, and it is

with no small confidence that I desire to see us set forth in quest of my beloved countess, who when her deliverance is once achieved, will be a powerful aid to us in recovering that of others."

"So be it, then," said the Varangian; "we will proceed in quest of the Countess Brenhilda; and if, on recovering her, we find ourselves strong enough to procure the freedom of the dark old man, my cowardice, or want of compassion, shall never stop the attempt."

CHAPTER XVII

> 'Tis strange that, in the dark sulphurous mine,
> Where wild ambition piles its ripening stores
> Of slumbering thunder, Love will interpose
> His tiny torch, and cause the stern explosion
> To burst, when the deviser's least aware.
>
> *Anonymous.*

About noon of the same day, Agelastes met with Achilles Tatius, the commander of the Varangian Guard, in those ruins of the Egyptian temple in which we formerly mentioned Hereward having had an interview with the philosopher. They met, as it seemed, in a very different humor. Tatius was gloomy, melancholy, and downcast; while the philosopher maintained the calm indifference which procured for him, and in some sort deserved, the title of the Elephant. "Thou blenchest, Achilles Tatius," said the philosopher," "now that thou hast frankly opposed thyself to all the dangers which stood between thee and greatness. Thou art like the idle boy who turned the mill-stream upon the machine, and that done, instead of making a proper use of it, was terrified at seeing it in motion."

"Thou dost me wrong, Agelastes," answered the Acolyte —"foul wrong; I am but like the mariner, who, although determined upon his voyage, yet cannot forbear a sorrowing glance at the shore, before he parts with it, it may be forever."

"It may have been right to think of this, but pardcn me, valiant Tatius, when I tell you the account should have been made up before; and the grandson of Algeric the Hun ought to have computed chances and consequences ere he stretched his hand to his master's diadem."

"Hush! for Heaven's sake," said Tatius, looking round; "that, thou knowest, is a secret between our two selves; for if Nicephorus, the Cæsar, should learn it, where were we and our conspiracy?"

"Our bodies on the gibbet, probably," answered Agelastes, "and our souls divorced from them, and in the way of discovering the secrets which thou hast hitherto taken upon trust."

"Well," said Achilles, "and should not the consciousness of the possibility of this fate render us cautious?"

"Cautious *men* if you will," answered Agelastes, "but not timid children."

"Stone walls can hear," said the Follower, lowering his voice. "Dionysius the tyrant, I have read, had an ear which conveyed to him the secrets spoken within his state-prison at Syracuse."

"And that ear is still stationary at Syracuse," said the Philosopher. "Tell me, my most simple friend, art thou afraid it has been transported hither in one night, as the Latins believe of Our Lady's house of Loretto?"

"No," answered Achilles, "but in an affair so important too much caution cannot be used."

"Well, thou most cautious of candidates for empire, and most cold of military leaders, know that the Cæsar, deeming, I think, that there is no chance of the empire falling to any one but himself, hath taken in his head to consider his succession to Alexius as a matter of course whenever the election takes place. In consequence, as matters of course are usually matters of indifference, he has left all thoughts of securing his interest upon this material occasion to thee and to me, while the foolish voluptuary hath himself run mad—for what, think you? Something between man and woman—female in her lineaments, her limbs, and a part at least of her garments; but, so help me St. George, most masculine in the rest of her attire, in her propensities, and in her exercises."

"The amazonian wife, thou meanest," said Achilles, "of that iron-handed Frank, who dashed to pieces last night the golden lion of Solomon with a blow of his fist? By St. George, the least which can come of such an amour is broken bones."

"That," said Agelastes, "is not quite so improbable as that Dionysius's ear should fly hither from Syracuse in a single night; but he is presumptuous in respect of the influence which his supposed good looks have gained him among the Grecian dames."

"He was too presumptuous, I suppose," said Achilles Tatius, "to make a proper allowance for his situation as Cæsar and the prospect of his being emperor."

"Meantime," said Agelastes, "I have promised him an interview with his Bradamante, who may perhaps reward his tender epithets of *zoe kai psyche** by divorcing his amorous soul from his unrivalled person."

* Life and soul.

"Meantime," said the Follower, "thou obtainest, I conclude, such orders and warrants as the Cæsar can give for the furtherance of our plot?"

"Assuredly," said Agelastes, "it is an opportunity not to be lost. This love fit, or mad fit, has blinded him; and without exciting too much attention to the progress of the plot, we can thus in safety conduct matters our own way, without causing malevolent remarks; and though I am conscious that in doing so I act somewhat at variance with my age and character, yet the end being to convert a worthy follower into an imperial leader, I shame me not in procuring that interview with the lady of which the Cæsar, as they term him, is so desirous. What progress, meanwhile, hast thou made with the Varangians, who are, in respect of execution, the very arm of our design?"

"Scarce so good as I could wish," said Achilles Tatius; "yet I have made sure of some two or three score of those whom I found most accessible; nor have I any doubt that, when the Cæsar is set aside, their cry will be for Achilles Tatius."

"And what of the gallant who assisted at our prelections," said Agelastes—"your Edward, as Alexius termed him?"

"I have made no impression upon him," said the Follower; "and I am sorry for it," for he is one whom his comrades think well of, and would gladly follow. Meantime, I have placed him as an additional sentinel upon the iron-witted Count of Paris, whom, both having an inveterate love of battle, he is very likely to put to death; and if it is afterwards challenged by the crusaders as a cause of war, it is only delivering up the Varangian, whose personal hatred will needs be represented as having occasioned the catastrophe. All this being prepared beforehand, how and when shall we deal with the Emperor?"

"For that," said Agelastes, "we must consult the Cæsar, who, although his expected happiness of to-day is not more certain than the state preferment that he expects to-morrow, and although his ideas are much more anxiously fixed upon his success with this said countess than his succession to the empire, will, nevertheless, expect to be treated as the head of the enterprise for accelerating the latter. But, to speak my opinion, valiant Tatius, to-morrow will be the last day that Alexius shall hold the reins of empire."

"Let me know for certain," said the Follower, "as soon as thou canst, that I may warn our brethren, who are to have in readiness the insurgent citizens, and those of the

Immortals who are combined with us, in the neighborhood of the court, and in readiness to act; and, above all, that I may disperse upon distant guards such Varangians as I cannot trust."

"Rely upon me," said Agelastes, "for the most accurate information and instructions, so soon as I have seen Nicephorus Briennius. One word permit me to ask—In what manner is the wife of the Cæsar to be disposed of?"

"Somewhere," said the Follower, "where I can never be compelled to hear more of her history. Were it not for that nightly pest of her lectures, I could be good-natured enough to take care of her destiny myself, and teach her the difference betwixt a real emperor and this Briennius, who thinks so much of himself." So saying, they separated, the Follower elated in look and manner considerably above what he had been when they met.

Agelastes looked after his companion with a scornful laugh. "There," he said, "goes a fool, whose lack of sense prevents his eyes from being dazzled by the torch which cannot fail to consume him. A half-bred, half-acting, half-thinking, half-daring caitiff, whose poorest thoughts—and those which deserve that name must be poor indeed—are not the produce of his own understanding. He expects to circumvent the fiery, haughty, and proud Nicephorus Briennius! If he does so, it will not be by his own policy, and still less by his valor. Nor shall Anna Comnena, the soul of wit and genius, be chained to such an unimaginative log as yonder half-barbarian. No; she shall have a husband of pure Grecian extraction, and well stored with that learning which was studied when Rome was great and Greece illustrious. Nor will it be the least charm of the imperial throne, that it is partaken by a partner whose personal studies have taught her to esteem and value those of the emperor." He took a step or two with conscious elevation, and then, as conscience-checked, he added, in a suppressed voice, "But then, if Anna were destined for empress, it follows of course that Alexius must die: no consent could be trusted to. And what then? the death of an ordinary man is indifferent, when it plants on the throne a philosopher and a historian; and at what time were the possessors of the empire curious to inquire when or by whose agency their predecessors died? Diogenes—ho, Diogenes!" The slave did not immediately come, so that Agelastes, wrapt in the anticipation of his greatness, had time to add a few more words. "Tush! I must reckon with Heaven, say the priests, for

many things, so I will throw this also into the account. The death of the Emperor may be twenty ways achieved without my having the blame of it. The blood which we have shed may spot our hand, if closely regarded, but it shall scarce stain our forehead."

Diogenes here entered.

"Has the Frank lady been removed?" said the philosopher.

The slave signified his assent.

"How did she bear her removal?"

"As authorized by your lordship, indifferently well. She had resented her separation from her husband, and her being detained in the palace, and committed some violence upon the slaves of the household, several of whom were said to be slain, although we perhaps ought only to read sorely frightened. She recognized me at once, and when I told her that I came to offer her a day's retirement in your own lodgings, until it should be in your power to achieve the liberation of her husband, she at once consented, and I deposited her in the secret Cytherean garden-house."

"Admirably done, my faithful Diogenes," said the philosopher; "thou art like the genii who attended on the Eastern talismans: I have but to intimate my will to thee, and it is accomplished."

Diogenes bowed deeply and withdrew.

"Yet remember, slave," said Agelastes, speaking to himself; "there is danger in knowing too much; and should my character ever become questioned, too many of my secrets are in the power of Diogenes."

At this moment a blow thrice repeated, and struck upon one of the images without, which had been so framed as to return a tingling sound, and in so far deserved the praise of being vocal, interrupted his soliloquy.

"There knocks," said he, "one of our allies; who can it be that comes so late?" He touched the figure of Isis with his staff, and the Cæsar Nicephorus Briennius entered in the full Grecian habit, and that graceful dress anxiously arranged to the best advantage. "Let me hope, my lord," said Agelastes, receiving the Cæsar with an apparently grave and reserved face, "your Highness comes to tell me that your sentiments are changed on reflection, and that whatever you had to confer about with this Frankish lady may be at least deferred until the principal part of our conspiracy has been successfully executed."

"Philosopher," answered the Cæsar, "no. My resolu-

tion, once taken, is not the sport of circumstances. Believe me, that I have not finished so many labors without being ready to undertake others. The favor of Venus is the reward of the labors of Mars, nor would I think it worth while to worship the god armipotent with the toil and risk attending his service, unless I had previously attained some decided proofs that I was wreathed with the myrtle, intimating the favor of his beautiful mistress."

"I beg pardon for my boldness," said Agelastes; "but has your Imperial Highness reflected that you were wagering, with the wildest rashness, an empire, including thine own life, mine, and all who are joined with us in a hardy scheme? And against what were they waged? Against the very precarious favor of a woman, who is altogether divided betwixt fiend and female, and in either capacity is most likely to be fatal to our present scheme, either by her good will or by the offense which she may take. If she prove such as you wish, she will desire to keep her lover by her side, and to spare him the danger of engaging in a perilous conspiracy; and if she remains, as the world believe her, constant to her husband, and to the sentiments she vowed to him at the altar, you may guess what cause of offense you are likely to give, by urging a suit which she has already received so very ill."

"Pshaw, old man! Thou turnest a dotard, and in the great knowledge thou possessest of other things, hast forgotten the knowledge best worth knowing—that of the beautiful part of the creation. Think of the impression likely to be made by a gallant, neither ignoble in situation nor unacceptable in presence, upon a lady who must fear the consequences of refusal. Come, Agelastes, let me have no more of thy croaking, auguring bad fortune like the raven from the blasted oak on the left hand; but declaim, as well thou canst, how faint heart never won fair lady, and how those best deserve empire who can wreathe the myrtles of Venus with the laurels of Mars. Come, man, undo me the secret entrance which combines these magical ruins with groves that are fashioned rather like those of Cytheros or Naxos."

"It must be as you will," said the philosopher, with a deep and somewhat affected sigh.

"Here, Diogenes!" called aloud the Cæsar; "when thou art summoned, mischief is not far distant. Come, undo the secret entrance. Mischief, my trusty negro, is not so distant but she will answer the first clatter of the stones."

The negro looked at his master, who returned him a glance acquiescing in the Cæsar's proposal. Diogenes then went to a part of the ruined wall which was covered by some climbing shrubs, all of which he carefully removed. This showed a little postern door, closed irregularly, and filled up, from the threshold to the top, with large square stones, all of which the slave took out and piled aside, as if for the purpose of replacing them. "I leave thee," said Agelastes to the negro, "to guard this door, and let no one enter, except he has the sign, upon the peril of thy life. It were dangerous it should be left open at this period of the day."

The obsequious Diogenes put his hand to his saber and to his head, as if to signify the usual promise of fidelity or death, by which those of his condition generally expressed their answer to their master's commands. Diogenes then lighted a small lantern, and, pulling out a key, opened an inner door of wood, and prepared to step forward.

"Hold, friend Diogenes," said the Cæsar; "thou wantest not thy lantern to discern an honest man, whom, if thou didst seek, I must needs say thou hast come to the wrong place to find one. Nail thou up these creeping shrubs before the entrance of the place, and abide thou there, as already directed, till our return, to parry the curiosity of any who may be attracted by the sight of the private passage."

The black slave drew back as he gave the lamp to the Cæsar, and Agelastes followed the light through a long, but narrow, arched passage, well supplied with air from space to space, and not neglected in the inside to the degree which its exterior would have implied.

"I will not enter with you into the gardens," said Agelastes, "or to the bower of Cytherea, where I am too old to be a worshiper. Thou thyself, I think, Imperial Cæsar, art well aware of the road, having traveled it divers times, and, if I mistake not, for the fairest reasons."

"The more thanks," said the Cæsar, "are due to mine excellent friend Agelastes, who forgets his own age to accommodate the youth of his friends."

CHAPTER XVIII

We must now return to the dungeon of the Blacquernal, where circumstances had formed at least a temporary union between the stout Varangian and Count Robert of Paris, who had a stronger resemblance to each other in their dispositions than probably either of them would have been willing to admit. The virtues of the Varangian were all of that natural and unrefined kind which nature herself dictates to a gallant man, to whom a total want of fear, and the most prompt alacrity to meet danger, had been attributes of a lifelong standing. The count, on the other hand, had all that bravery, generosity, and love of adventure which was possessed by the rude soldier, with the virtues, partly real, partly fantastic, which those of his rank and country acquired from the spirit of chivalry. The one might be compared to the diamond as it came from the mine, before it had yet received the advantages of cutting and setting; the other was the ornamented gem, which, cut into facets and richly set, had lost perhaps a little of its original substance, yet still, at the same time, to the eye of an inspector, had something more showy and splendid than when it was, according to the phrase of lapidaries, *en brut*. In the one case, the value was more artificial; in the other, it was the more natural and real of the two. Chance, therefore, had made a temporary alliance between two men the foundation of whose characters bore such strong resemblance to each other that they were only separated by a course of education, which had left rigid prejudices on both sides, and which prejudices were not unlikely to run counter to each other. The Varangian commenced his conversation with the Count in a tone of familiarity, approaching nearer to rudeness than the speaker was aware of, and much of which, though most innocently intended by Hereward might be taken amiss by his new brother-in-arms. The most offensive part of his deportment, however, was a blunt, bold disregard to the title of those whom he addressed, adhering thereby to the manners of the Saxons, from whom he drew his descent, and which was likely to be at least unpleasing to the Franks as well as Normans, who had already received and become very tenacious of the privileges of the

feudal system, the mummery of heraldry, and the warlike claims assumed by knights, as belonging only to their own order.

Hereward was apt, it must be owned, to think too little of these distinctions ; while he had at least a sufficient tendency to think enough of the power and wealth of the Greek empire which he served, of the dignity inherent in Alexius Comnenus, and which he also disposed to grant to the Grecian officers who, under the Emperor, commanded his own corps, and particularly to Achilles Tatius. This man Hereward knew to be a coward, and half-suspected to be a villain. Still, however, the Follower was always the direct channel through which the imperial graces were conferred on the Varangians in general, as well as upon Hereward himself ; and he had always the policy to represent such favors as being more or less indirectly the consequence of his own intercession. He was supposed vigorously to espouse the quarrel of the Varangians, in all the disputes between them and the other corps ; he was liberal and open-handed ; gave every soldier his due ; and, bating the trifling circumstance of valor, which was not particularly his forte, it would have been difficult for these strangers to have demanded a leader more to their wishes. Besides this, our friend Hereward was admitted by him into his society, attended him, as we have seen, upon secret expeditions, and shared, therefore, deeply in what may be termed by an expressive, though vulgar, phrase the sneaking kindness entertained for this new Achilles by the greater part of his myrmidons.

Their attachment might be explained, perhaps, as a liking to their commander as strong as could well exist with a marvelous lack of honor and esteem. The scheme, therefore, formed by Hereward to effect the deliverance of the Count of Paris comprehended as much faith to the Emperor and his representative, the Acolyte or Follower, as was consistent with rendering justice to the injured Frank.

In furtherance of this plan, he conducted Count Robert from the subterranean vaults of the Blacquernal, of the intricacies of which he was master, having been repeatedly of late stationed sentinel there, for the purpose of acquiring that knowledge of which Tatius promised himself the advantage in the ensuing conspiracy. When they were in the open air, and at some distance from the gloomy towers of the palace, he bluntly asked the Count of Paris whether he knew Agelastes the Philosopher. The other answered in the negative.

" Look you now, sir knight, you hurt yourself in attempt-

ing to impose upon me," said Hereward. "You must know him; for I saw you dined with him yesterday."

"O! with that learned old man?" said the Count. "I know nothing of him worth owning or disguising to thee or any one. A wily person he is, half herald and half minstrel."

"Half procurer and whole knave," subjoined the Varangian. "With the mask of apparent good-humor, he conceals his pandering to the vices of others; with the specious jargon of philosophy, he has argued himself out of religious belief and moral principle; and, with the appearance of the most devoted loyalty, he will, if he is not checked in time, either argue his too confiding master out of life and empire, or, if he fails in this, reason his simple associates into death and misery."

"And do you know all this," said Count Robert, "and permit this man to go unimpeached?"

"O, content you, sir," replied the Varangian; "I cannot yet form any plot which Agelastes may not countermine; but the time will come, nay, it is already approaching, when the Emperor's attention shall be irresistibly turned to the conduct of this man, and then let the philosopher sit fast, or by St. Dunstan the barbarian overthrows him! I would only fain, methinks, save from his clutches a foolish friend, who has listened to his delusions."

"But what have I to do," said the Count, "with this man or with his plots?"

"Much," said Hereward, "although you know it not. The main supporter of this plot is no other than the Cæsar, who ought to be the most faithful of men; but ever since Alexius has named a Sebastocrator, an officer that is higher in rank, and nearer to the throne, than the Cæsar himself, so long has Nicephorus Briennius been displeased and dissatisfied, though for what length of time he has joined the schemes of the astucious Agelastes it is more difficult to say. This I know, that for many months he has fed liberally, as his riches enable him to do, the vices and prodigality of the Cæsar. He has encouraged him to show disrespect to his wife, although the Emperor's daughter; has put ill-will between him and the royal family. And if Briennius bears no longer the fame of a rational man and the renown of a good leader, he is deprived of both by following the advice of this artful sycophant."

"And what is all this to me?" said the Frank. "Agelastes may be a true man or a time-serving slave; his

master, Alexius Comnenus, is not so much allied to me or mine that I should meddle in the intrigues of his court?"

"You may be mistaken in that," said the blunt Varangian; "if these intrigues involve the happiness and virtue——"

"Death of a thousand martyrs!" said the Frank, "doth paltry intrigues and quarrels of slaves involve a single thought of suspicion of the noble Countess of Paris? The oaths of thy whole generation were ineffectual to prove but that one of her hairs had changed its color to silver."

"Well imagined, gallant knight," said the Anglo-Saxon; "thou art a husband fitted for the atmosphere of Constantinople, which calls for little vigilance and a strong belief. Thou wilt find many followers and fellows in this court of ours."

"Hark thee, friend," replied the Frank, "let us have no more words, nor walk farther together than just to the most solitary nook of this bewildered city, and let us there set to that work which we left even now unfinished."

"If thou wert a duke, sir count," replied the Varangian, "thou couldst not invite to a combat one who is more ready for it. Yet consider the odds on which we fight. If I fall, my moan is soon made; but will my death set thy wife at liberty if she is under restraint, or restore her honor if it is tarnished? Will it do anything more than remove from the world the only person who is willing to give thee aid, at his own risk and danger, and who hopes to unite thee to thy wife, and replace thee at the head of thy forces?"

"I was wrong," said the Count of Paris—"I was entirely wrong; but beware, my good friend, how thou couplest the name of Brenhilda of Aspramonte with the word of dishonor, and tell me, instead of this irritating discourse, whither go we now?"

"To the Cytherean gardens of Agelastes, from which we are not far distant," said the Anglo-Saxon; "yet he hath a nearer way to it than that by which we now travel, else I should be at a loss to account for the short space in which he could exchange the charms of his garden for the gloomy ruins of the Temple of Isis and the Imperial Palace of the Blacquernal."

"And wherefore, and how long," said Count Robert, "dost thou conclude that my countess is detained in these gardens?"

"Ever since yesterday," replied Hereward. "When both

I and several of my companions, at my request, kept close watch upon the Cæsar and your lady, we did plainly perceive passages of fiery admiration on his part, and anger, as it seemed, on hers, which Agelastes, being Nicephorus's friend, was likely, as usual, to bring to an end by a separation of you both from the army of the crusaders, that your wife, like many a matron before, might have the pleasure of taking up her residence in the gardens of that worthy sage; while you, my lord, might take up your own permanently in the castle of Blacquernal."

"Villain! why didst thou not apprise me of this yesterday?"

"A likely thing," said Hereward, "that I should feel myself at liberty to leave the ranks and make such a communication to a man whom, far from a friend, I then considered in the light of a personal enemy! Methinks that, instead of such language as this, you should be thankful that so many chance circumstances have at length brought me to befriend and assist you."

Count Robert felt the truth of what was said, though at the same time his fiery temper longed to avenge itself, according to its wont, upon the party which was nearest at hand.

But now they arrived at what the citizens of Constantinople called the Philosopher's Gardens. Here Hereward hoped to obtain entrance, for he had gained a knowledge of some part, at least, of the private signals of Achilles and Agelastes, since he had been introduced to the last at the ruins of the Temple of Isis. They had not indeed admitted him to their entire secret; yet, confident in his connection with the Follower, they had no hesitation in communicating to him snatches of knowledge such as, committed to a man of shrewd natural sense like the Anglo-Saxon, could scarce fail, in time and by degrees, to make him master of the whole. Count Robert and his companion stood before an arched door, the only opening in a high wall, and the Anglo-Saxon was about to knock, when, as if the idea had suddenly struck him—

"What if the wretch Diogenes opens the gate? We must kill him ere he can fly back and betray us. Well, it is a matter of necessity, and the villain has deserved his death by a hundred horrid crimes."

"Kill him then, thyself," retorted Count Robert; "he is nearer thy degree, and assuredly I will not defile the name of Charlemagne with the blood of a black slave."

"Nay, God-a-mercy!" answered the Anglo-Saxon, "but you must bestir yourself in the action supposing there come rescue, and that I be overborne by odds."

"Such odds," said the knight, "will render the action more like a *mêlée*, or general battle; and assure yourself I will not be slack when I may, with my honor, be active."

"I doubt it not," said the Varangian; "but the distinction seems a strange one, that, before permitting a man to defend himself or annoy his enemy, requires him to demand the pedigree of his ancestor."

"Fear you not, sir," said Count Robert. "The strict rule of chivalry indeed bears what I tell thee, but when the question is, Fight or not? there is great allowance to be made for a decision in the affirmative."

"Let me give, then, the exorciser's rap," replied Hereward, "and see what fiend will appear."

So saying, he knocked in a particular manner, and the door opened inwards; a dwarfish negress stood in the gap, her white hair contrasted singularly with her dark complexion, and with the broad, laughing look peculiar to these slaves. She had something in her physiognomy which, severely construed, might argue malice and a delight in human misery.

"Is Agelastes——" said the Varangian; but he had not completed the sentence when she answered him by pointing down a shadowed walk.

The Anglo-Saxon and Frank turned in that direction, when the hag rather muttered than said distinctly, "You are one of the initiated, Varangian; take heed whom you take with you when you may hardly, peradventure, be welcomed even going alone."

Hereward made a sign that he understood her, and they were instantly out of her sight. The path winded beautifully through the shades of an Eastern garden, where clumps of flowers and labyrinths of flowering shrubs, and the tall boughs of the forest trees, rendered even the breath of noon cool and acceptable.

"Here we must use our utmost caution," said Hereward, speaking in a low tone of voice; "for here it is most likely the deer that we seek has found its refuge. Better allow me to pass before, since you are too deeply agitated to possess the coolness necessary for a scout. Keep concealed beneath yon oak, and let no vain scruples of honor deter you from creeping beneath the underwood, or beneath the earth itself, if you should hear a footfall. If the lovers have agreed,

Agelastes, it is probable, walks his round, to prevent intrusion."

"Death and furies, it cannot be!" exclaimed the fiery Frank. "Lady of the Broken Lances, take thy votary's life ere thou torment him with this agony."

He saw, however, the necessity of keeping a strong force upon himself, and permitted, without further remonstrance, the Varangian to pursue his way, looking, however, earnestly after him. By advancing forward a little, he could observe Hereward draw near to a pavilion which arose at no great distance from the place where they had parted. Here he observed him apply first his eye and then his ear to one of the casements, which were in a great measure grown over and excluded from the light by various flowering shrubs. He almost thought he saw a grave interest take place in the countenance of the Varangian, and he longed to have his share of the information which he had doubtless obtained.

He crept, therefore, with noiseless steps, through the same labyrinth of foliage which had covered the approaches of Hereward; and so silent were his movements, that he touched the Anglo-Saxon, in order to make him aware of his presence, before he observed his approach.

Hereward, not aware at first by whom he was approached, turned on the intruder with a countenance like a burning coal. Seeing, however, that it was the Frank, he shrugged his shoulders, as if pitying the impatience which could not be kept under prudent restraint, and, drawing himself back, allowed the Count the privilege of a peeping-place through plinths of the casement, which could not be discerned by the sharpest eye from the inner side. The somber character of the light which penetrated into this abode of pleasure was suited to that species of thought to which a temple of Cytherea was supposed to be dedicated. Portraits and groups of statuary were also to be seen, in the taste of those which they had beheld at the kiosk of the waterfall, yet something more free in the ideas which they conveyed than were to be found at their first resting-place. Shortly after, the door of the pavilion opened, and the Countess entered, followed by her attendant Agatha. The lady threw herself on a couch as she came in, while her attendant, who was a young and very handsome woman, kept herself modestly in the background, so much so as hardly to be distinguished.

"What dost thou think," said the Countess, "of so suspicious a friend as Agelastes, so gallant an enemy as the Cæsar, as he is called?"

"What should I think," returned the damsel, "except that what the old man calls friendship is hatred, and what the Cæsar terms a patriotic love for his country, which will not permit him to set its enemies at liberty, is in fact too strong an affection for his fair captive?"

"For such an affection," said the Countess, "he shall have the same requital as if it were indeed the hostility of which he would give it the color. My true and noble lord, hadst thou any idea of the calamities to which they have subjected me, how soon wouldst thou break through every restraint to hasten to my relief!"

"Art thou a man," said Count Robert to his companion, "and canst thou advise me to remain still and hear this?"

"I am one man," said the Anglo-Saxon, "you, sir, are another; but all our arithmetic will not make us more than two; and in this place it is probable that a whistle from the Cæsar, or a scream from Agelastes, would bring a thousand to match us, if we were as bold as Bevis of Hampton. Stand still and keep quiet. I counsel this less as respecting my own life, which, by embarking upon a wildgoose chase with so strange a partner, I have shown I put at little value, than for thy safety, and that of the lady thy countess, who shows herself as virtuous as beautiful."

"I was imposed on at first," said the Lady Brenhilda to her attendant. "Affectation of severe morals, of deep learning, and of rigid rectitude, assumed by this wicked old man, made me believe in part the character which he pretended; but the gloss is rubbed off since he let me see into his alliance with the unworthy Cæsar, and the ugly picture remains in its native loathsomeness. Nevertheless, if I can, by address or subtlety, deceive this arch-deceiver—as he has taken from me, in a great measure, every other kind of assistance—I will not refuse that of craft, which he may find perhaps equal to his own?"

"Hear you that?" said the Varangian to the Count of Paris. "Do not let your impatience mar the web of your lady's prudence. I will weigh a woman's wit against a man's valor where there is aught to do. Let us not come in with our assistance until time shall show us that it is necessary for her safety and our success."

"Amen," said the Count of Paris; "but hope not, sir Saxon, that thy prudence shall persuade me to leave this garden without taking full vengeance on that unworthy Cæsar, and the pretended philosopher, if indeed he turns out to have assumed a character——" The Count was here

beginning to raise his voice, when the Saxon, without ceremony, placed his hand on his mouth. "Thou takest a liberty," said Count Robert, lowering, however, his tones.

"Ay, truly," said Hereward; "when the house is on fire, I do not stop to ask whether the water which I pour on it be perfumed or no."

This recalled the Frank to a sense of his situation; and if not contented with the Saxon's mode of making an apology, he was at least silenced. A distant noise was now heard; the Countess listened, and changed color. "Agatha," she said, "we are like champions in the lists, and here comes the adversary. Let us retreat into this side apartment, and so for a while put off an encounter thus alarming." So saying, the two females withdrew into a sort of ante-room, which opened from the principal apartment behind the seat which Brenhilda had occupied.

They had scarcely disappeared, when, as the stage direction has it, enter from the other side the Cæsar and Agelastes. They had perhaps heard the last words of Brenhilda, for the Cæsar repeated in a low tone—

"Militat omnis amans, habet et sua castra Cupido.

What, has our fair opponent withdrawn her forces? No matter, it shows she thinks of the warfare, though the enemy be not in sight. Well, thou shalt not have to upbraid me this time, Agelastes, with precipitating my amours, and depriving myself of the pleasure of pursuit. By Heavens, I will be as regular in my progress as if in reality I bore on my shoulders the whole load of years which make the difference between us; for I shrewdly suspect that with thee, old man, it is that envious churl Time that hath plucked the wings of Cupid."

"Say not so, mighty Cæsar," said the old man; "it is the hand of Prudence, which, depriving Cupid's wing of some wild feathers, leaves him still enough to fly with an equal and steady flight."

"Thy flight, however, was less measured, Agelastes, when thou didst collect that armory—that magazine of Cupid's panoply, out of which thy kindness permitted me but now to arm myself, or rather to repair my accouterments."

So saying, he glanced his eye over his own person, blazing with gems, and adorned with a chain of gold, bracelets, rings, and other ornaments, which, with a new and splendid habit, assumed since his arrival at these Cytherean gardens, tended to set off his very handsome figure.

"I am glad," said Agelastes, "if you have found among toys, which I now never wear, and seldom made use of even when life was young with me, anything which may set off your natural advantages. Remember only this slight condition, that such of these trifles as have made part of your wearing-apparel on this distinguished day cannot return to a meaner owner, but must of necessity remain the property of that greatness of which they had once formed the ornament."

"I cannot consent to this, my worthy friend," said the Cæsar; "I know thou valuest these jewels only in so far as a philosopher may value them—that is, for nothing save the remembrances which attach to them. This large seal-ring, for instance, was, I have heard you say, the property of Socrates; if so, you cannot view it save with devout thankfulness that your own philosophy has never been tried with the exercise of a Xantippe. These clasps released, in olden times, the lovely bosom of Phryne; and they now belong to one who could do better homage to the beauties they concealed or discovered than could the cynic Diogenes. These buckles, too——"

"I will spare thy ingenuity, good youth," said Agelastes, somewhat nettled—"or rather, noble Cæsar. Keep thy wit; thou wilt have ample occasion for it."

"Fear not me," said the Cæsar. "Let us proceed, since you will, to exercise the gifts which we possess, such as they are, either natural or bequeathed to us by our dear and respected friend. Hah!" he said, the door opening suddenly and the Countess almost meeting him, "our wishes are here anticipated."

He bowed accordingly with the deepest deference to the Lady Brenhilda, who, having made some alterations to enhance the splendor of her attire, now moved forward from the withdrawing-room into which she had retreated.

"Hail, noble lady," said the Cæsar, "whom I have visited with the intention of apologizing for detaining you, in some degree against your will, in those strange regions in which you unexpectedly find yourself."

"Not in some degree," answered the lady, "but entirely contrary to my inclinations, which are, to be with my husband the Count of Paris, and the followers who have taken the cross under his banner."

"Such, doubtless, were your thoughts when you left the land of the West," said Agelastes; "but, fair countess, have they experienced no change? You have left a shore streaming with human blood when the slightest provocation

occurred, and thou hast come to one whose principal maxim is to increase the sum of human happiness by every mode which can be invented. In the West yonder, he or she is respected most who can best exercise their tyrannical strength in making others miserable, while in these more placid realms we reserve our garlands for the ingenious youth or lovely lady who can best make happy the person whose affection is fixed upon her."

"But, reverend philosopher," said the Countess, "who laborest so artificially in recommending the yoke of pleasure, know that you contradict every notion which I have been taught from my infancy. In the land where my nurture lay, so far are we from acknowledging your doctrines, that we match not except, like the lion and the lioness, when the male has compelled the female to acknowledge his superior worth and valor. Such is our rule, that a damsel, even of mean degree, would think herself heinously undermatched if wedded to a gallant whose fame in arms was yet unknown."

"But, noble lady," said the Cæsar, "a dying man may then find room for some faint hope. Were there but a chance that distinction in arms could gain those affections which have been stolen, rather than fairly conferred, how many are there who would willingly enter into the competition where the prize is so fair! What is the enterprise too bold to be undertaken on such a condition? And where is the individual whose heart would not feel that, in baring his sword for the prize, he made vow never to return it to the scabbard without the proud boast, 'What I have not yet won, I have deserved?'"

"You see, lady," said Agelastes, who, apprehending that the last speech of the Cæsar had made some impression, hastened to follow it up with a suitable observation—"you see that the fire of chivalry burns as gallantly in the bosom of the Grecians as in that of the Western nations."

"Yes," answered Brenhilda, "and I have heard of the celebrated siege of Troy, on which occasion a dastardly coward carried off the wife of a brave man, shunned every proffer of encounter with the husband whom he had wronged, and finally caused the death of his numerous brothers, the destruction of his native city, with all the wealth which it contained, and died himself the death of a pitiful poltroon, lamented only by his worthless leman, to show how well the rules of chivalry were understood by your predecessors."

"Lady, you mistake," said the Cæsar; "the offenses of

Paris were those of a dissolute Asiastic; the courage which avenged them was that of the Greek empire."

"You are learned, sir," said the lady; "but think not that I will trust your words until you produce before me a Grecian knight gallant enough to look upon the armed crest of my husband without quaking."

"That, methinks, were not extremely difficult," returned the Cæsar: "if they have not flattered me, I have myself been thought equal in battle to more dangerous men than him who has been strangely mated with the Lady Brenhilda."

"That is soon tried," answered the Countess. "You will hardly, I think, deny that my husband, separated from me by some unworthy trick, is still at thy command, and could be produced at thy pleasure. I will ask no armor for him save what he wears, no weapon but his good sword Tranchefer; then place him in this chamber, or any other lists equally narrow, and if he flinch, or cry craven, or remain dead under shield, let Brenhilda be the prize of the conqueror. Merciful Heaven!" she concluded, as she sunk back upon her seat, "forgive me for the crime of even imagining such a termination, which is equal almost to doubting Thine unerring judgment."

"Let me, however," said the Cæsar, "catch up these precious words before they fall to the ground. Let me hope that he to whom the Heavens shall give power and strength to conquer this highly-esteemed Count of Paris shall succeed him in the affections of Brenhilda; and believe me, the sun plunges not through the sky to his resting place with the same celerity that I shall hasten to the encounter."

"Now, by Heaven!" said Count Robert, in an anxious whisper to Hereward, "it is too much to expect me to stand by and hear a contemptible Greek, who durst not stand even the rattling farewell which Tranchefer takes of his scabbard, brave me in my absence, and effect to make love to my lady *par amours*. And she, too—methinks Brenhilda allows more license than she is wont to do to yonder chattering popinjay. By the rood! I will spring into the apartment, front them with my personal appearance, and confute yonder braggart in a manner he is like to remember."

"Under favor," said the Varangian, who was the only auditor of this violent speech, "you shall be ruled by calm reason while I am with you. When we are separated, let the devil of knight-errantry, which has such possession of thee, take thee upon his shoulders and carry thee full tilt wheresoever he lists."

"Thou art a brute," said the Count, looking at him with a contempt corresponding to the expression he made use of; "not only without humanity, but without the sense of natural honor or natural shame. The most despicable of animals stands not by tamely and sees another assail his mate. The bull offers his horns to a rival, the mastiff uses his jaws, and even the timid stag becomes furious and gores."

"Because they are beasts," said the Varangian, "and their mistresses also creatures without shame or reason, who are not aware of the sanctity of a choice. But thou, too, Count, canst thou not see the obvious purpose of this poor lady, forsaken by all the world, to keep her faith towards thee, by eluding the snares with which wicked men have beset her? By the souls of my fathers! my heart is so much moved by her ingenuity, mingled as I see it is with the most perfect candor and faith, that I myself, in fault of a better champion, would willingly raise the ax in her behalf."

"I thank thee, my good friend," said the Count—"I thank thee as heartily as if it were possible thou shouldst be left to do that good office for Brenhilda, the beloved of many a noble lord, the mistress of many a powerful vassal; and, what is more—much more than thanks, I crave thy pardon for the wrong I did thee but now."

"My pardon you cannot need," said the Varangian; "for I take no offense that is not seriously meant. Stay, they speak again."

"It is strange it should be so," said the Cæsar, as he paced the apartment; "but methinks, nay, I am almost certain, Agelastes, that I hear voices in the vicinity of this apartment of thy privacy."

"It is impossible," said Agelastes; "but I will go and see."

Perceiving him to leave the pavilion, the Varangian made the Frank sensible that they must crouch down among a little thicket of evergreens, where they lay completely obscured. The philosopher made his rounds with a heavy step but a watchful eye; and the two listeners were obliged to observe the strictest silence, without motion of any kind, until he had completed an ineffectual search, and returned into the pavilion.

"By my faith, brave man," said the Count, "ere we return to our skulking-place, I must tell thee in thine ear that never in my life was temptation so strong upon me as that

which prompted me to beat out that old hypocrite's brains, provided I could have reconciled it with my honor; and heartily do I wish that thou, whose honor no way withheld thee, had experienced and given way to some impulse of a similar nature."

"Such fancies have passed through my head," said the Varangian; "but I will not follow them till they are consistent both with our own safety and more particularly with that of the Countess."

"I thank thee again for thy good-will to her," said Count Robert; "and, by Heaven! if fight we must at length, as it seems likely, I will neither grudge thee an honorable antagonist nor fair quarter if the combat goes against thee."

"Thou hast my thanks," was the reply of Hereward; "only, for Heaven's sake, be silent in this conjuncture, and do what thou wilt afterwards."

Before the Varangian and the Count had again resumed their posture of listeners, the parties within the pavilion, conceiving themselves unwatched, had resumed their conversation, speaking low, yet with considerable animation.

"It is in vain you would persuade me," said the Countess, "that you know not where my husband is, or that you have not the most absolute influence over his captivity. Who else could have an interest in banishing or putting to death the husband but he that affects to admire the wife?"

"You do me wrong, beautiful lady," answered the Cæsar, "and forget that I can in no shape be termed the moving-spring of this empire; that my father-in-law, Alexius, is the Emperor; and that the woman who terms herself my wife is jealous as a fiend can be of my slightest motion. What possibility was there that I should work the captivity of your husband and your own? The open affront which the Count of Paris put upon the Emperor was one which he was likely to avenge, either by secret guile or by open force. Me it no way touched, save as the humble vassal of thy charms; and it was by the wisdom and the art of the sage, Agelastes, that I was able to extricate thee from the gulf in which thou hadst else certainly perished. Nay, weep not, lady, for as yet we know not the fate of Count Robert; but, credit me, it is wisdom to choose a better protector, and consider him as no more."

"A better than him," said Brenhilda, "I can never have, were I to choose out of the knighthood of all the world."

"This hand," said the Cæsar, drawing himself into a martial attitude, "should decide that question, were the

man of whom thou thinkest so much yet moving on the face of this earth, and at liberty."

"Thou art," said Brenhilda, looking fixedly at him, with the fire of indignation flashing from every feature—"thou art—but it avails not telling thee what is thy real name; believe me, the world shall one day ring with it, and be justly sensible of its value. Observe what I am about to say. Robert of Paris is gone, or captive, I know not where. He cannot fight the match of which thou seemest so desirous; but here stands Brenhilda, born heiress of Aspramonte, by marriage the wedded wife of the good Count of Paris. She was never matched in the lists by mortal man except the valiant Count, and since thou art so grieved that thou canst not meet her husband in battle, thou canst not surely object if she is willing to meet thee in his stead?"

"How, madam!" said the Cæsar, astonished; "do you propose yourself to hold the lists against me?"

"Against you!" said the Countess—"against all the Grecian empire, if they shall affirm that Robert of Paris is justly used and lawfully confined."

"And are the conditions," said the Cæsar, "the same as if Count Robert himself held the lists? The vanquished must then be at the pleasure of the conqueror for good or evil."

"It would seem so," said the Countess, "nor do I refuse the hazard; only that, if the other champion shall bite the dust, the noble Count Robert shall be set at liberty, and permitted to depart with all suitable honors."

"This I refuse not," said the Cæsar, "provided it is in my power."

A deep growling sound, like that of a modern gong, here interrupted the conference.

CHAPTER XIX

THE Varangian and Count Robert, at every risk of discovery, had remained so near as fully to conjecture, though they could not expressly overhear, the purport of the conversation.

"He has accepted her challenge?" said the Count of Paris.

"And with apparent willingness," said Hereward.

"O, doubtless—doubtless," answered the crusader; "but he knows not the skill in war which a woman may attain; for my part, God knows I have enough depending upon the issue of this contest, yet such is my confidence, that I would to God I had more. I vow to Our Lady of the Broken Lances that I desire every furrow of land I possess, every honor which I can call my own, from the countship of Paris down to the leather that binds my spur, were dependent and at issue upon this fair field between your Cæsar, as men term him, and Brenhilda of Aspramonte."

"It is a noble confidence," said the Varangian, "nor durst I say it is a rash one; only I cannot but remember that the Cæsar is a strong man as well as a handsome, expert in the use of arms, and, above all, less strictly bound than you esteem yourself by the rules of honor. There are many ways in which advantage may be given and taken, which will not, in the Cæsar's estimation, alter the character of the field from an equal one, although it might do so in the opinion of the chivalrous Count of Paris, or even in that of the poor Varangian. But first let me conduct you to some place of safety, for your escape must be soon, if it is not already, detected. The sounds which we heard intimate that some of his confederate plotters have visited the garden on other than love affairs. I will guide thee to another avenue than that by which we entered. But you would hardly, I suppose, be pleased to adopt the wisest alternative?"

"And what may that be?" said the Count.

"To give thy purse, though it were thine all, to some poor ferryman to waft thee over the Hellespont, then hasten to carry thy complaint to Godfrey of Bouillon, and what friends thou mayst have among thy brethren crusaders,

and determine, as thou easily canst, on a sufficient number of them to come back and menace the city with instant war, unless the Emperor should deliver up thy lady, most unfairly made prisoner, and prevent, by his authority, this absurd and unnatural combat."

"And would you have me, then," said Count Robert, "move the crusaders to break a fairly appointed field of battle? Do you think that Godfrey of Bouillon would turn back upon his pilgrimage for such an unworthy purpose; or that the Countess of Paris would accept as a service means of safety which would stain her honor forever, by breaking an appointment solemnly made on her own challenge? Never."

"My judgment is then at fault," said the Varangian, "for I see I can hammer out no expedient which is not, in some extravagant manner or another, controlled by your foolish notions. Here is a man who has been trapped into the power of his enemy, that he might not interfere to prevent a base stratagem upon his lady, involving both her life and honor; yet he thinks it a matter of necessity that he keeps faith as precisely with these midnight poisoners as he would had it been pledged to the most honorable men!"

"Thou say'st a painful truth," said Count Robert; "but my word is the emblem of my faith; and if I pass it to a dishonorable or faithless foe, it is imprudently done on my part; but if I break it, being once pledged, it is a dishonorable action, and the disgrace can never be washed from my shield."

"Do you mean, then," said the Varangian, "to suffer your wife's honor to remain pledged as it at present is on the event of an unequal combat?"

"God and the saints pardon thee such a thought!" said the Count of Paris. "I will go to see this combat with a heart as firm, if not as light, as any time I ever saw spears splintered. If by the influence of any accident or treachery —for fairly, and with such an antagonist, Brenhilda of Aspramonte cannot be overthrown—I step into the lists, proclaim the Cæsar as he is—a villain, show the falsehood of his conduct from beginning to end, appeal to every noble heart that hears me, and then—God show the right!"

Hereward paused, and shook his head. "All this," he said, "might be feasible enough, provided the combat were to be fought in the presence of your own countrymen, or even, by the mass! if the Varangians were to be guards of the lists. But treachery of every kind is so familiar to the

Greeks, that I question if they would view the conduct of their Cæsar as anything else than a pardonable and natural stratagem of Dan Cupid, to be smiled at rather than subjected to disgrace or punishment."

"A nation," said Count Robert, "who could smile at such a jest, may Heaven refuse them sympathy at their utmost need, when their sword is broken in their hand, and their wives and daughters shrieking in the relentless grasp of a barbarous enemy!"

Hereward looked upon his companion, whose flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes bore witness to his enthusiasm.

"I see," he said, "you are resolved, and I know that your resolution can in justice be called by no other name than an act of heroic folly. What then? It is long since life has been bitter to the Varangian exile. Morn has raised him from a joyless bed, which night has seen him lie down upon, wearied with wielding a mercenary weapon in the wars of strangers. He has longed to lay down his life in an honorable cause, and this is one in which the extremity and very essence of honor is implicated. It tallies also with my scheme of saving the Emperor, which will be greatly facilitated by the downfall of his ungrateful son-in-law." Then addressing himself to the Count, he continued, "Well, sir count, as thou art the person principally concerned, I am willing to yield to the reasoning in this affair; but I hope you will permit me to mingle with your resolution some advices of a more everyday and less fantastic nature. For example, thy escape from the dungeons of the Blacquernal must soon be generally known. In prudence, indeed, I myself must be the first to communicate it, since otherwise the suspicion will fall on me. Where do you think of concealing yourself, for assuredly the search will be close and general?"

"For that," said the Count of Paris, "I must be indebted to thy suggestion, with thanks for every lie which thou findest thyself obliged to make, to contrive, and produce in my behalf, entreating thee only to render them as few as possible, they being a coin which I myself never fabricate."

"Sir knight," answered Hereward, "let me begin first by saying that no knight that ever belted sword is more a slave to truth, when truth is observed towards him, than the poor soldier who talks to thee; but when the game depends not upon fair play, but upon lulling men's cautiousness asleep by falsehood, and drugging their senses by opiate draughts, they who would scruple at no means of deceiving me can hardly expect that I, who am paid in such base money, should

pass nothing on my part but what is lawful and genuine. For the present thou must remain concealed within my poor apartment in the barracks of the Varangians, which is the last place where they will think of seeking for thee. Take this, my upper cloak, and follow me; and now that we are about to leave these gardens, thou mayst follow me unsuspected as a sentinel attending his officer; for, take it along with you, noble count, that we Varangians are a sort of persons upon whom the Greeks care not to look very long or fixedly."

They now reached the gate where they had been admitted by the negress, and Hereward, who was entrusted with the power, it seems, of letting himself out of the philosopher's premises, though not of entering without assistance from the portress, took out a key which turned the lock on the garden side, so that they soon found themselves at liberty. They then proceeded by by-paths through the city, Hereward leading the way, and the Count following, without speech or remonstrance, until they stood before the portal of the barracks of the Varangians.

"Make haste," said the sentinel who was on duty, "dinner is already begun." The communication sounded joyfully in the ears of Hereward, who was much afraid that his companion might have been stopped and examined. By a side passage he reached his own quarters, and introduced the Count into a small room, the sleeping-chamber of his squire, where he apologized for leaving him for some time; and, going out, locked the door, for fear, as he said, of intrusion.

The demon of suspicion was not very likely to molest a mind so frankly constituted as that of Count Robert, and yet the last action of Hereward did not fail to occasion some painful reflections.

"This man," he said, "had needs be true, for I have reposed in him a mighty trust, which few hirelings in his situation would honorably discharge. What is to prevent him to report to the principal officer of his watch that the Frank prisoner, Robert Count of Paris, whose wife stands engaged for so desparate a combat with the Cæsar, has escaped, indeed, this morning from the prisons of the Blacquernal, but has suffered himself to be trepanned at noon, and is again a captive in the barracks of the Varangian Guard? What means of defense are mine, were I discovered to these mercenaries? What man could do, by the favor of Our Lady of the Broken Lances, I have not failed to achieve. I have slain a tiger in single combat. I have

killed one warder, and conquered the desperate and gigantic creature by whom he was supported. I have had terms enough at command to bring over this Varangian to my side, in appearance at least; yet all this does not encourage me to hope that I could long keep at bay ten or a dozen such men as these beef-fed knaves appear to be, led in upon me by a fellow of thews and sinews such as those of my late companion. Yet, for shame, Robert! such thoughts are unworthy a descendant of Charlemagne. When wert thou wont so curiously to count thine enemies, and when wert thou wont to be suspicious, since he whose bosom may truly boast itself incapable of fraud ought in honesty to be the last to expect it in another? The Varangian's look is open, his coolness in danger is striking, his speech is more frank and ready than ever was that of a traitor. If he is false, there is no faith in the hand of nature, for truth, sincerity, and courage are written upon his forehead."

While Count Robert was thus reflecting upon his condition, and combating the thick-coming doubts and suspicious which its uncertainties gave rise to, he began to be sensible that he had not eaten for many hours; and amidst many doubts and fears of a more heroic nature, he half entertained a lurking suspicion that they meant to let hunger undermine his strength before they adventured into the apartment to deal with him.

We shall best see how far these doubts were deserved by Hereward, or how far they were unjust, by following his course after he left his barrack-room. Snatching a morsel of dinner, which he eat with an affectation of great hunger, but, in fact, that his attention to his food might be a pretense for dispensing with disagreeable questions, or with conversation of any kind, he pleaded duty, and, immediately leaving his comrades, directed his course to the lodgings of Achilles Tatius, which were a part of the same building. A Syrian slave, who opened the door, after a deep reverence to Hereward, whom he knew as a favorite attendant of the Acolyte, said to him that his master was gone forth, but had desired him to say that, if he wished to see him, he would find him at the Philosopher's Gardens, so called as belonging to the sage Agelastes.

Hereward turned about instantly, and, availing himself of his knowledge of Constantinople to thread its streets in the shortest time possible, at length stood alone before the door in the garden-wall at which he and the Count of Paris had previously been admitted in the earlier part of the day. The

same negress appeared at the same private signal, and when he asked for Achilles Tatius, she replied, with some sharpness, "Since you were here this morning, I marvel you did not meet him, or that, having business with him, you did not stay till he arrived. Sure I am, that not long after you entered the garden the Acolyte was inquiring for you."

"It skills not, old woman," said the Varangian; "I communicate the reason of my motions to my commander, but not to thee." He entered the garden accordingly, and, avoiding the twilight-path that led to the Bower of Love—so was the pavilion named in which he had overheard the dialogue between the Cæsar and the Countess of Paris—he arrived before a simple garden-house, whose humble and modest front seemed to announce that it was the abode of philosophy and learning. Here, passing before the windows, he made some little noise, expecting to attract the attention either of Achilles Tatius or his accomplice Agelastes, as chance should determine. It was the first who heard and who replied. The door opened; a lofty plume stooped itself, that its owner might cross the threshold, and the stately form of Achilles Tatius entered the gardens. "What now," he said, "our trusty sentinel? what hast thou, at this time of day, come to report to us? Thou art our good friend and highly-esteemed soldier, and well we wot thine errand must be of importance since thou hast brought it thyself, and at an hour so unusual."

"Pray Heaven," said Hereward, "that the news I have brought deserve a welcome."

"Speak them instantly," said the Acolyte, "good or bad: thou speakest to a man to whom fear is unknown." But his eye, which quailed as he looked on the soldier; his color, which went and came; his hands, which busied themselves in an uncertain manner in adjusting the belt of his sword—all argued a state of mind very different from that which his tone of defiance would fain have implied. "Courage," he said, "my trusty soldier! speak the news to me. I can bear the worst thou hast to tell."

"In a word, then," said the Varangian, "your valor directed me this morning to play the office of master of the rounds upon those dungeons of the Blacquernal Palace where last night the boisterous Count Robert of Paris was incarcerated——"

"I remember well," said Achilles Tatius. "What then?"

"As I reposed me," said Hereward, "in an apartment above the vaults, I heard cries from beneath, of a kind

which attracted my attention. I hastened to examine, and my surprise was extreme when, looking down into the dungeon, though I could see nothing distinctly, yet, by the wailing and whimpering sounds, I conceived that the man of the forest, the animal called Sylvan, whom our soldiers have so far indoctrinated in our Saxon tongue as to make him useful in the wards of the prison, was bemoaning himself on account of some violent injury. Descending with a torch, I found the bed on which the prisoner had been let down burnt to cinders, the tiger which had been chained within a spring of it with its skull broken to pieces, the creature called Sylvan prostrate and writhing under great pain and terror, and no prisoner whatever in the dungeon. There were marks that all the fastenings had been withdrawn by a Mytilenian soldier, companion of my watch, when he visited the dungeon at the usual hour; and as, in my anxious search, I at length found his dead body, slain apparently by a stab in the throat, I was obliged to believe that, while I was examining the cell, he, this Count Robert, with whose daring life the adventure is well consistent, had escaped to the upper air, by means, doubtless, of the ladder and trap-door by which I had descended."

"And wherefore didst thou not instantly call 'treason,' and raise the hue and cry?" demanded the Acolyte.

"I dared not venture to do so," replied the Varangian, "till I had instructions from your valor. The alarming cry of 'treason,' and the various rumors likely at this moment to ensue, might have involved a search so close as perchance would have discovered matters in which the Acolyte himself would have been rendered subject to suspicion."

"Thou art right," said Achilles Tatius, in a whisper; "and yet it will be necessary that we do not pretend any longer to conceal the flight of this important prisoner, if we would not pass for being his accomplices. Where thinkest thou this unhappy fugitive can have taken refuge?"

"That I was in hopes of learning from your valor's greater wisdom," said Hereward.

"Thinkest thou not," said Achilles, "that he may have crossed the Hellespont, in order to rejoin his own countrymen and adherents?"

"It is much to be dreaded," said Hereward. "Undoubtedly, if the Count listened to the advice of any one who knew the face of the country, such would be the very counsel he would receive."

"The danger, then, of his return at the head of a venge-

ful body of Franks," said the Acolyte, "is not so immediate as I apprehended at first, for the Emperor gave positive orders that the boats and galleys which yesterday transported the crusaders to the shores of Asia should recross the strait, and bring back no single one of them from the step upon their journey on which he had so far furthered them. Besides, they all—their leaders, that is to say—made their vows before crossing that they would not turn back so much as a foot's pace, now that they had set actually forth on the road to Palestine."

"So, therefore," said Hereward, "one of two propositions is unquestionable—either Count Robert is on the eastern side of the strait, having no means of returning with his brethren to avenge the usage he has received, and may therefore be securely set at defiance; or else he lurks somewhere in Constantinople, without a friend or ally to take his part, or encourage him openly to state his supposed wrongs. In either case, there can, I think, be no tact in conveying to the palace the news that he has freed himself, since it would only alarm the court, and afford the Emperor ground for many suspicions. But it is not for an ignorant barbarian like me to prescribe a course of conduct to your valor and wisdom, and methinks the sage Agelastes were a fitter counselor than such as I am."

"No—no—no," said the Acolyte, in a hurried whisper; "the philosopher and I are right good friends—sworn good friends, very especially bound together; but should it come to this that one of us must needs throw before the footstool of the Emperor the head of the other, I think thou wouldst not advise that I, whose hairs have not a trace of silver, should be the last in making the offering; wherefore, we will say nothing of this mishap, but give thee full power and the highest charge to seek for Count Robert of Paris, be he dead or alive, to secure him within the dungeons set apart for the discipline of our own corps, and when thou hast done so, to bring me notice. I may make him my friend in many ways, by extricating his wife from danger by the axes of my Varangians. What is there in this metropolis that they have to oppose them?"

"When raised in a just cause," answered Hereward, "nothing."

"Hah! say'st thou?" said the Acolyte. How meanest thou by that? But I know. Thou art scrupulous about having the just and lawful command of thy officer in every action in which thou art engaged, and, thinking in that

dutiful and soldierlike manner, it is my duty as thine Acolyte to see thy scruples satisfied. A warrant shalt thou have, with full powers, to seek for and imprison this foreign count of whom we have been speaking. And, hark thee, my excellent friend," he continued, with some hesitation, "I think thou hadst better begone, and begin, or rather continue, thy search. It is unnecessary to inform our friend Agelastes of what has happened, until his advice be more needful than as yet it is on the occasion. Home—home to the barracks; I will account to him for thy appearance here, if he be curious on the subject, which, as a suspicious old man, he is likely to be. Go to the barracks, and act as if thou hadst a warrant in every respect full and ample. I will provide thee with one when I come back to my quarters."

The Varangian turned hastily homewards.

"Now, is it not," he said, "a strange thing, and enough to make a man a rogue for life, to observe how the devil encourages young beginners in falsehood? I have told a greater lie—at least I have suppressed more truth—than on any occasion before in my whole life, and what is the consequence? Why, my commander throws almost at my head a warrant sufficient to guarantee and protect me in all I have done, or propose to do. If the foul fiend were thus regular in protecting his votaries, methinks they would have little reason to complain of him, or better men to be astonished at their number. But a time comes, they say, when he seldom fails to desert them. Therefore, get thee behind me, Satan. If I have seemed to be thy servant for a short time, it is but with an honest and Christian purpose."

As he entertained these thoughts, he looked back upon the path, and was startled at an apparition of a creature of a much greater size, and a stranger shape, than human, covered, all but the face, with a reddish-dun fur; his expression an ugly, and yet a sad, melancholy; a cloth was wrapt round one hand, and an air of pain and languor bespoke suffering from a wound. So much was Hereward preoccupied with his own reflections, that at first he thought his imagination had actually raised the devil; but, after a sudden start of surprise, he recognized his acquaintance Sylvan. "Hah! old friend," he said, "I am happy thou hast made thy escape to a place where thou wilt find plenty of fruit to support thee. Take my advice—keep out of the way of discovery. Keep thy friend's counsel."

The man of the wood uttered a chattering noise in return to this address.

"I understand thee," said Hereward, "thou wilt tell no tales, thou sayest; and faith I will trust thee rather than the better part of my own two-legged race, who are eternally circumventing or murdering each other."

A minute after the creature was out of sight Hereward heard the shriek of a female, and a voice which cried for help. The accents must have been uncommonly interesting to the Varangian, since, forgetting his own dangerous situation, he immediately turned and flew to the suppliant's assistance.

CHAPTER XX

> She comes! she comes! in all the charms of youth,
> Unequall'd love, and unsuspected truth!

HEREWARD was not long in tracing the cry through the wooded walks, when a female rushed into his arms, alarmed, as it appeared, by Sylvan, who was pursuing her closely. The figure of Hereward, with his ax uplifted, put an instant stop to his career, and with a terrified note of his native cries he withdrew into the thickest of the adjoining foliage.

Relieved from his presence, Hereward had time to look at the female whom he had succored. She was arrayed in a dress which consisted of several colors, that which predominated being a pale yellow; her tunic was of this color, and, like a modern gown, was closely fitted to the body, which, in the present case, was that of a tall but very well-formed person. The mantle, or upper garment, in which the whole figure was wrapped, was of fine cloth; and the kind of hood which was attached to it having flown back with the rapidity of her motion, gave to view the hair, beautifully adorned and twisted into a natural headdress. Beneath this natural headgear appeared a face pale as death, from a sense of the supposed danger, but which preserved, even amidst its terrors, an exquisite degree of beauty.

Hereward was thunderstruck at this apparition. The dress was neither Grecian, Italian, nor of the costume of the Franks; it was *Saxon,* connected by a thousand tender remembrances with Hereward's childhood and youth. The circumstance was most extraordinary. Saxon women, indeed, there were in Constantinople, who had united their fortunes with those of the Varangians; and those often chose to wear their national dress in the city, because the character and conduct of their husbands secured them a degree of respect which they might not have met with either as Grecian or as stranger females of a similar rank. But almost all these were personally known to Hereward. It was no time, however, for reverie: he was himself in danger, the situation of the young female might be no safe one. In every case, it

was judicious to quit the more public part of the gardens; he therefore lost not a moment in conveying the fainting Saxon to a retreat he fortunately was acquainted with. A covered path, obscured by vegetation, led through a species of labyrinth to an artificial cave, at the bottom of which, half-paved with shells, moss, and spar, lay the gigantic and half-recumbent statue of a river deity, with its usual attributes—that is, its front crowned with water-lilies and sedges, and its ample hand half-resting upon an empty urn. The attitude of the whole figure corresponded with the motto—"I SLEEP—AWAKE ME NOT."

"Accursed relic of paganism," said Hereward, who was, in proportion to his light, a zealous Christian—"brutish stock or stone that thou art! I will wake thee with a vengeance." So saying, he struck the head of the slumbering deity with his battle-ax, and deranged the play of the fountain so much that the water began to pour into the basin.

"Thou art a good block, nevertheless," said the Varangian, "to send succor so needful to the aid of my poor countrywoman. Thou shalt give her also, with thy leave, a portion of thy couch." So saying, he arranged his fair burden, who was as yet insensible, upon the pedestal where the figure of the river-god reclined. In doing this, his attention was recalled to her face, and again and again he was thrilled with an emotion of hope, but so excessively like fear that it could only be compared to the flickering of a torch, uncertain whether it is to light up or be instantly extinguished. With a sort of mechanical attention, he continued to make such efforts as he could to recall the intellect of the beautiful creature before him. His feelings were those of the astronomical sage, to whom the rise of the moon slowly restores the contemplation of that heaven which is at once, as a Christian, his hope of felicity, and, as a philosopher, the source of his knowledge. The blood returned to her cheek, and reanimation, and even recollection, took place in her earlier than in the astonished Varangian.

"Blessed Mary!" she said, "have I indeed tasted the last bitter cup, and is it here where thou reunitest thy votaries after death? Speak, Hereward, if thou art aught but an empty creature of the imagination—speak, and tell me if I have but dreamed of that monstrous ogre!"

"Collect thyself, my beloved Bertha," said the Anglo-Saxon, recalled by the sound of her voice, "and prepare to endure what thou livest to witness, and thy Hereward

survives to tell. That hideous thing exists—nay, do not start, and look for a hiding-place—thy own gentle hand with a riding-rod is sufficient to tame its courage. And am I not here, Bertha? Wouldst thou wish another safeguard?"

"No—no," exclaimed she, seizing on the arm of her recovered lover. "Do I not know you now?"

"And is it but now you know me, Bertha?" said Hereward.

"I suspected before," she said, casting down her eyes; "but I know with certainty that mark of the boar's tusk."

Hereward suffered her imagination to clear itself from the shock it had received so suddenly before he ventured to enter upon present events, in which there was so much both to doubt and to fear. He permitted her, therefore, to recall to her memory all the circumstances of the rousing the hideous animal, assisted by the tribes of both their fathers. She mentioned in broken words the flight of arrows discharged against the boar by young and old, male and female, and how her own well-aimed but feeble shaft wounded him sharply; she forgot not how, incensed at the pain, the creature rushed upon her as the cause, laid her palfrey dead upon the spot, and would soon have slain her, had not Hereward, when every attempt failed to bring his horse up to the monster, thrown himself from his seat and interposed personally between the boar and Bertha. The battle was not decided without a desperate struggle; the boar was slain, but Hereward received the deep gash upon his brow which she whom he had saved now recalled to her memory. "Alas!" she said, "what have we been to each other since that period? and what are we now, in this foreign land?"

"Answer for thyself, my Bertha," said the Varangian, "if thou canst; and if thou canst with truth say that thou art the same Bertha who vowed affection to Hereward, believe me, it were sinful to suppose that the saints have brought us together with a view of our being afterwards separated."

"Hereward," said Bertha, "you have not preserved the bird in your bosom safer than I have: at home or abroad, in servitude or in freedom, amidst sorrow or joy, plenty or want, my thought was always on the troth I had plighted to Hereward at the stone of Odin."

"Say no more of that," said Hereward; "it was an impious rite, and good could not come of it."

"Was it then so impious?" she said, the unbidden tears

rushing into her large blue eye. "Alas! it was a pleasure to reflect that Hereward was mine by that solemn engagement."

"Listen to me, my Bertha," said Hereward, taking her hand. "We were then almost children; and though our vow was in itself innocent, yet it was so far wrong, as being sworn in the presence of a dumb idol, representing one who was, while alive, a bloody and cruel magician. But we will, the instant an opportunity offers itself, renew our vow before a shrine of real sanctity, and promise suitable penance for our ignorant acknowledgment of Odin, to propitiate the real Deity, who can bear us through those storms of adversity which are like to surround us."

Leaving them for the time to their love-discourse, of a nature pure, simple, and interesting, we shall give, in few words, all that the reader needs to know of their separate history between the boar's hunt and the time of their meeting in the gardens of Agelastes.

In that doubtful state experienced by outlaws, Waltheoff, the father of Hereward, and Engelred, the parent of Bertha, used to assemble their unsubdued tribes, sometimes in the fertile regions of Devonshire, sometimes in the dark wooded solitudes of Hampshire, but as much as possible within the call of the bugle of the famous Ederic the Forester, so long leader of the insurgent Saxons. The chiefs we have mentioned were among the last bold men who asserted the independence of the Saxon race of England; and like their captain, Ederic, they were generally known by the name of Foresters, as men who lived by hunting, when their power of making excursions was checked and repelled. Hence they made a step backwards in civilization, and became more like to their remote ancestors of German descent than they were to their more immediate and civilized predecessors, who, before the battle of Hastings, had advanced considerably in the arts of civilized life.

Old superstitions had begun to revive among them, and hence the practise of youths and maidens plighting their troth at the stone circles dedicated, as it was supposed, to Odin, in whom, however, they had long ceased to nourish any of the sincere belief which was entertained by their heathen ancestors.

In another respect these outlaws were fast reassuming a striking peculiarity of the ancient Germans. Their circumstances naturally brought the youth of both sexes much together, and by early marriage, or less permanent connec-

tions, the population would have increased far beyond the means which the outlaws had to maintain, or even to protect, themselves. The laws of the Foresters, therefore, strictly enjoined that marriages should be prohibited until the bridegroom was twenty-one years complete. Future alliances were indeed often formed by the young people, nor was this discountenanced by their parents, provided that the lovers waited until the period when the majority of the bridegroom should permit them to marry. Such youths as infringed this rule incurred the dishonorable epithet of "niddering," or worthless—an epithet of a nature so insulting that men were known to have slain themselves rather than endure life under such opprobrium. But the offenders were very few amidst a race trained in moderation and self-denial; and hence it was that woman, worshiped for so many years like something sacred, was received, when she became the head of a family, into the arms and heart of a husband who had so long expected her, was treated as something more elevated than the mere idol of the moment, and, feeling the rate at which she was valued, endeavored by her actions to make her life correspond with it.

It was by the whole population of these tribes as well as their parents, that, after the adventure of the boar-hunt, Hereward and Bertha were considered as lovers whose alliance was pointed out by Heaven, and they were encouraged to approximate as much as their mutual inclinations prompted them. The youths of the tribe avoided asking Bertha's hand at the dance, and the maidens used no maidenly entreaty or artifice to detain Hereward beside them if Bertha was present at the feast. They clasped each other's hands through the perforated stone which they called the altar of Odin, though later ages have ascribed it to the Druids, and they implored that, if they broke their faith to each other, their fault might be avenged by the twelve swords which were now drawn around them during the ceremony by as many youths, and that their misfortunes might be so many as twelve maidens, who stood around with their hair loosened, should be unable to recount, either in prose or verse.

The torch of the Saxon Cupid shone for some years as brilliant as when it was first lighted. The time, however, came when they were to be tried by adversity, though undeserved by the perfidy of either. Years had gone past, and Hereward had to count with anxiety how many months and weeks were to separate him from the bride who was beginning already by degrees to shrink less shyly from the expressions

and caresses of one who was soon to term her all his own. William Rufus, however, had formed a plan of totally extirpating the Foresters, whose implacable hatred and restless love of freedom had so often disturbed the quiet of his kingdom, and despised his forest laws. He assembled his Norman forces, and united to them a body of Saxons who had submitted to his rule. He thus brought an overpowering force upon the bands of Waltheoff and Engelred, who found no resource but to throw the females of their tribe, and such as could not bear arms, into a convent dedicated to St. Augustine, of which Kenelm their relation was prior, and then turning to the battle, vindicated their ancient valor by fighting it to the last. Both the unfortunate chiefs remained dead on the field, and Hereward and his brother had well-nigh shared their fate; but some Saxon inhabitants of the neighborhood, who adventured on the field of battle, which the victors had left bare of everything save the booty of the kites and the ravens, found the bodies of the youths still retaining life. As they were generally well known and much beloved by these people, Hereward and his brother were taken care of till their wounds began to close and their strength returned. Hereward then heard the doleful news of the death of his father and Engelred. His next inquiry was concerning his betrothed bride and her mother. The poor inhabitants could give him little information. Some of the females who had taken refuge in the convent the Norman knights and nobles had seized upon as their slaves, and the rest, with the monks who had harbored them, were turned adrift, and their place of retreat was completely sacked and burnt to the ground.

Half-dead himself at hearing these tidings, Hereward sallied out, and at every risk of death, for the Saxon Foresters were treated as outlaws, commenced inquiries after those so dear to him. He asked concerning the particular fate of Bertha and her mother among the miserable creatures who yet hovered about the neighborhood of the convent, like a few half-scorched bees about their smothered hive. But, in the magnitude of their own terrors, none had retained eyes for their neighbors, and all that they could say was, that the wife and daughter of Engelred were certainly lost; and their imaginations suggested so many heart-rending details to this conclusion, that Hereward gave up all thoughts of further researches, likely to terminate so uselessly and so horribly.

The young Saxon had been all his life bred up in a patri-

otic hatred to the Normans, who did not, it was likely, become dearer to his thoughts in consequence of this victory. He dreamed at first of crossing the strait, to make war against the hated enemy in their own country ; but an idea so extravagant did not long retain possession of his mind. His fate was decided by his encountering an aged palmer, who knew, or pretended to have known, his father, and to be a native of England. This man was a disguised Varangian, selected for the purpose, possessed of art and dexterity, and well provided with money. He had little difficulty in persuading Hereward, in the hopeless desolation of his condition, to join the Varangian Guard, at this moment at war with the Normans, under which name it suited Hereward's prepossessions to represent the Emperor's wars with Robert Guiscard, his son Bohemond, and other adventures, in Italy, Greece, or Sicily. A journey to the East also inferred a pilgrimage, and gave the unfortunate Hereward the chance of purchasing pardon for his sins by visiting the Holy Land. In gaining Hereward, the recruiter also secured the services of his elder brother, who had vowed not to separate from him.

The high character of both brothers for courage induced this wily agent to consider them as a great prize, and it was from the memoranda respecting the history and character of those whom he recruited, in which the elder had been unreservedly communicative, that Agelastes picked up the information respecting Hereward's family and circumstances, which, at their first secret interview, he made use of to impress upon the Varangian the idea of his supernatural knowledge. Several of his companions-in-arms were thus gained over ; for it will easily be guessed that these memorials were entrusted to the keeping of Achilles Tatius, and he, to further their joint purposes, imparted them to Agelastes, who thus obtained a general credit for supernatural knowledge among these ignorant men. But Hereward's blunt faith and honesty enabled him to shun the snare.

Such being the fortunes of Hereward, those of Bertha formed the subject of a broken and passionate communication between the lovers, broken like an April day, and mingled with many a tender caress, such as modesty permits to lovers when they meet again unexpectedly after a separation which threatened to be eternal. But the story may be comprehended in few words. Amid the general sack of the monastery, an old Norman knight seized upon Bertha as his prize. Struck with her beauty, he designed her as

an attendant upon his daughter, just then come out of the years of childhood, and the very apple of her father's eye, being the only child of his beloved countess, and sent late in life to bless their marriage bed. It was in the order of things that the Lady of Aspramonte, who was considerably younger than the knight, should govern her husband, and that Brenhilda, their daughter, should govern both her parents.

The knight of Aspramonte, however, it may be observed, entertained some desire to direct his young offspring to more feminine amusements than those which began already to put her life frequently in danger. Contradiction was not to be thought of, as the good old knight knew by experience. The influence and example of a companion a little older* than herself might be of some avail, and it was with this view that, in the confusion of the sack, Aspramonte seized upon the youthful Bertha. Terrified to the utmost degree, she clung to her mother, and the knight of Aspramonte, who had a softer heart than was then usually found under a steel cuirass, moved by the affliction of the mother and daughter, and recollecting that the former might also be a useful attendant upon his lady, extended his protection to both, and, conveying them out of the press, paid the soldiers who ventured to dispute the spoil with him partly in some small pieces of money, and partly in dry blows with the reverse of his lance.

The well-natured knight soon after returned to his own castle, and being a man of an orderly life and virtuous habits, the charming beauties of the Saxon virgin, and the more ripened charms of her mother, did not prevent their traveling in all honor as well as safety to his family fortress, the Castle of Aspramonte. Here such masters as could be procured were got together to teach the young Bertha every sort of female accomplishment, in the hope that her mistress, Brenhilda, might be inspired with a desire to partake in her education; but although this so far succeeded that the Saxon captive became highly skilled in such music, needlework, and other female accomplishments as were known to the time, yet her young mistress, Brenhilda, retained the taste for those martial amusements which had so sensibly grieved her father, but to which her mother, who herself had nourished such fancies in her youth, readily gave sanction.

The captives, however, were kindly treated. Brenhilda

* [Compare pp. 9 and 131.]

became infinitely attached to the young Anglo-Saxon, whom she loved less for her ingenuity in arts than for her activity in field sports, to which her early state of independence had trained her.

The Lady of Aspramonte was also kind to both the captives; but in one particular she exercised a piece of petty tyranny over them. She had imbibed an idea, strengthened by an old doting father-confessor, that the Saxons were heathens at that time, or at least heretics, and made a positive point with her husband that the bondswoman and girl who were to attend on her person and that of her daughter should be qualified for the office by being anew admitted into the Christian Church by baptism.

Though feeling the falsehood and injustice of the accusation, the mother had sense enough to submit to necessity, and received the name of Martha in all form at the altar, to which she answered during the rest of her life.

But Bertha showed a character upon this occasion inconsistent with the general docility and gentleness of her temper. She boldly refused to be admitted anew into the pale of the church, of which her conscience told her she was already a member, or to exchange for another the name originally given her at the font. It was in vain that the old knight commanded, that the lady threatened, and that her mother advised and entreated. More closely pressed in private by her mother, she let her motive be known, which had not before been suspected. "I know," she said, with a flood of tears, "that my father would have died ere I was subjected to this insult; and then—who shall assure me that vows which were made to the Saxon Bertha will be binding if a French Agatha be substituted in her stead? They may banish me," she said, "or kill me if they will, but if the son of Waltheoff should again meet with the daughter of Engelred, he shall meet that Bertha whom he knew in the forests of Hampton."

All argument was in vain; the Saxon maiden remained obstinate, and to try to break her resolution, the Lady of Aspramonte at length spoke of dismissing her from the service of her young mistress, and banishing her from the castle. To this also she had made up her mind, and she answered firmly, though respectfully, that she would sorrow bitterly at parting with her young lady; but as to the rest, she would rather beg under her own name than be recreant to the faith of her fathers, and condemn it as heresy, by assuming one of Frank origin. The Lady Brenhilda, in the

meantime, entered the chamber where her mother was just about to pass the threatened doom of banishment. "Do not stop for my entrance, madam," said the dauntless young lady; "I am as much concerned in the doom which you are about to pass as is Bertha; if she crosses the drawbridge of Aspramonte as an exile, so will I, when she has dried her tears, of which even my petulance could never wring one from her eyes. She shall be my squire and body attendant, and Launcelot, the bard, shall follow with my spear and shield."

"And you will return, mistress," said her mother, "from so foolish an expedition before the sun sets?"

"So Heaven further me in my purpose, lady," answered the young heiress, "the sun shall neither rise nor set that sees us return till this name of Bertha, and of her mistress, Brenhilda, are wafted as far as the trumpet of fame can sound them. Cheer up, my sweetest Bertha!" she said, taking her attendant by the hand, "if Heaven hath torn thee from thy country and thy plighted troth, it hath given thee a sister and a friend, with whom thy fame shall be forever blended."

The Lady of Aspramonte was confounded. She knew that her daughter was perfectly capable of the wild course which she had announced, and that she herself, even with her husband's assistance, would be unable to prevent her following it. She passively listened, therefore, while the Saxon matron, formerly Urica, but now Martha, addressed her daughter. "My child," she said, "as you value honor, virtue, safety, and gratitude, soften your heart towards your master and mistress, and follow the advice of a parent, who has more years and more judgment than you. And you, my dearest young lady, let not your lady-mother think that an attachment to the exercises you excel in has destroyed in your bosom filial affection and a regard to the delicacy of your sex. As they seem both obstinate, madam," continued the matron, after watching, the influence of this advice upon the young women, "perhaps, if it may be permitted me, I could state an alternative which might, in the meanwhile, satisfy your ladyship's wishes, accommodate itself to the wilfulness of my obstinate daughter, and answer the kind purpose of her generous mistress."

The Lady of Aspramonte signed to the Saxon matron to proceed. She went on accordingly: "The Saxons, dearest lady, of the present day, are neither pagans nor heretics: they are, in the time of keeping Easter, as well as in all

other disputable doctrine, humbly obedient to the Pope of Rome; and this our good bishop well knows, since he upbraided some of the domestics for calling me an old heathen. Yet our names are uncouth in the ears of the Franks, and bear, perhaps, a heathenish sound. If it be not exacted that my daughter submit to a new rite of baptism, she will lay aside her Saxon name of Bertha upon all occasions while in your honorable household. This will cut short a debate which, with forgiveness, I think is scarce of importance enough to break the peace of this castle. I will engage that, in gratitude for this indulgence of a trifling scruple, my daughter, if possible, shall double the zeal and assiduity of her service to her young lady."

The Lady of Aspramonte was glad to embrace the means which this offer presented of extricating herself from the dispute with as little compromise of dignity as could well be. "If the good Lord Bishop approved of such a compromise," she said, "she would for herself withdraw her opposition." The prelate approved accordingly, the more readily that he was informed that the young heiress desired earnestly such an agreement. The peace of the castle was restored, and Bertha recognized her new name of Agatha as a name of service, but not a name of baptism.

One effect the dispute certainly produced, and that was, increasing in an enthusiastic degree the love of Bertha for her young mistress. With that amiable failing of attached domestics and humble friends, she endeavored to serve her as she knew she loved to be served; and therefore indulged her mistress in those chivalrous fancies which distinguished her even in her own age, and in ours would have rendered her a female Quixote. Bertha, indeed, never caught the frenzy of her mistress; but, strong, willing, and able-bodied, she readily qualified herself to act upon occasion as a squire of the body to a lady adventuress; and, accustomed from her childhood to see blows dealt, blood flowing, and men dying, she could look with an undazzled eye upon the dangers which her mistress encountered, and seldom teased her with remonstrances, unless when those were unusually great. This compliance on most occasions gave Bertha a right of advice upon some, which, always given with the best intentions and at fitting times, strengthened her influence with her mistress, which a course of conduct savoring of diametrical opposition would certainly have destroyed.

A few more words serve to announce the death of the knight of Aspramonte, the romantic marriage of the young

lady with the Count of Paris, their engagement in the crusade, and the detail of events with which the reader is acquainted.

Hereward did not exactly comprehend some of the later incidents of the story, owing to a slight strife which arose between Bertha and him during the course of her narrative. When she avowed the girlish simplicity with which she obstinately refused to change her name, because, in her apprehension, the troth-plight betwixt her and her lover might be thereby prejudiced, it was impossible for Hereward not to acknowledge her tenderness by snatching her to his bosom and impressing his grateful thanks upon her lips. She extricated herself immediately from his grasp, however, with cheeks more crimsoned in modesty than in anger, and gravely addressed her lover thus: "Enough—enough, Hereward, this may be pardoned to so unexpected a meeting, but we must in future remember that we are probably the last of our race; and let it not be said that the manners of their ancestors were forgotten by Hereward and by Bertha. Think that, though we are alone, the shades of our fathers are not far off, and watch to see what use we make of the meeting which, perhaps, their intercession has procured us."

"You wrong me, Bertha," said Hereward, "if you think me capable of forgetting my own duty and yours at a moment when our thanks are due to Heaven, to be testified very differently than by infringing on its behests or the commands of our parents. The question is now, How we shall rejoin each other when we separate, since separate, I fear, we must?"

"O! do not say so," exclaimed the unfortunate Bertha.

"It must be so," said Hereward, "for a time; but I swear to thee, by the hilt of my sword and the handle of my battle-ax, that blade was never so true to shaft as I will be to thee."

"But wherefore, then, leave me, Hereward?" said the maiden; "and, oh! wherefore not assist me in the release of my mistress?"

"Of thy mistress!" said Hereward. "Shame! that thou canst give that name to mortal woman!"

"But she *is* my mistress," answered Bertha, "and by a thousand kind ties, which cannot be separated so long as gratitude is the reward of kindness."

"And what is her danger," said Hereward—"what is it she wants, this accomplished lady whom thou callest mistress?"

"Her honor, her life, are alike in danger," said Bertha. "She has agreed to meet the Cæsar in the field, and he will not hesitate, like a base-born miscreant, to take every advantage in the encounter, which, I grieve to say, may in all likelihood be fatal to my mistress."

"Why dost thou think so?" answered Hereward. "This lady has won many single combats, unless she is belied, against adversaries more formidable than the Cæsar."

"True," said the Saxon maiden, "but you speak of things that passed in a far different land, where faith and honor are not empty sounds, as, alas! they seem but too surely to be here. Trust me, it is no girlish terror which sends me out in this disguise of my country dress, which, they say, finds respect at Constantinople: I go to let the chiefs of the crusade know the peril in which the noble lady stands, and trust to their humanity, to their religion, to their love of honor, and fear of disgrace, for assistance in this hour of need; and now that I have had the blessing of meeting with thee, all besides will go well—all will go well—and I will back to my mistress and report whom I have seen."

"Tarry yet another moment, my recovered treasure," said Hereward, "and let me balance this matter carefully. This Frankish lady holds the Saxons like the very dust that thou brushest from the hem of her garment. She treats, she regards, the Saxons as pagans and heretics. She has dared to impose slavish tasks upon thee, born in freedom. Her father's sword has been imbrued to the hilt with Anglo-Saxon blood; perhaps that of Waltheoff and Engelred has added depth to the stain. She has been, besides, a presumptuous fool, usurping for herself the trophies and warlike character which belong to the other sex. Lastly, it will be hard to find a champion to fight in her stead, since all the crusaders have passed over to Asia, which is the land, they say, in which they have come to war; and by orders of the Emperor no means of return to the hither shore will be permitted to any of them."

"Alas—alas!" said Bertha, "how does this world change us! The son of Waltheoff I once knew brave, ready to assist distress, bold and generous. Such was what I pictured him to myself during his absence. I have met him again, and he is calculating, cold, and selfish."

"Hush, damsel," said the Varangian, "and know him of whom thou speakest ere thou judgest him. The Countess of Paris is such as I have said; yet let her appear boldly in the lists, and when the trumpet shall sound thrice another

shall reply, which shall announce the arrival of her own noble lord to do battle in her stead; or, should he fail to appear, I will requite her kindness to thee, Bertha, and be ready in his place."

"Wilt thou?— wilt thou indeed?" said the damsel. "That was spoken like the son of Waltheoff—like the genuine stock. I will home and comfort my mistress; for surely if the judgment of God ever directed the issue of a judicial combat, its influence will descend upon this. But you hint that the Count is here—that he is at liberty; she will inquire about that."

"She must be satisfied," replied Hereward, "to know that her husband is under the guidance of a friend who will endeavor to protect him from his own extravagancies and follies; or, at all events, of one who, if he cannot properly be called a friend, has certainly not acted, and will not act, towards him the part of an enemy. And now, farewell, long lost—long loved——!" Before he could say more, the Saxon maiden, after two or three vain attempts to express her gratitude, threw herself into her lover's arms, and, despite the coyness which she had recently shown, impressed upon his lips the thanks which she could not speak.

They parted, Bertha returning to her mistress at the lodge, which she had left both with trouble and danger, and Hereward by the portal kept by the negro-portress, who, complimenting the handsome Varangian on his success among the fair, intimated that she had been in some sort a witness of his meeting with the Saxon damsel. A piece of gold, part of a late largesse, amply served to bribe her tongue; and the soldier, clear of the gardens of the philosopher, sped back as he might to the barrack, judging that it was full time to carry some supply to Count Robert, who had been left without food the whole day.

It is a common popular saying that, as the sensation of hunger is not connected with any pleasing or gentle emotion, so it is particularly remarkable for irritating those of anger and spleen. It is not, therefore, very surprising that Count Robert, who had been so unusually long without sustenance, should receive Hereward with a degree of impatience beyond what the occasion merited, and injurious certainly to the honest Varangian, who had repeatedly exposed his life that day for the interest of the Countess and the Count himself.

"Soh, sir!" he said, in that accent of affected restraint by which a superior modifies his displeasure against his inferior into a cold and scornful expression, "you have played a liberal

host to us! Not that it is of consequence; but methinks a count of the most Christian kingdom dines not every day with a mercenary soldier, and might expect, if not the ostentatious, at least the needful, part of hospitality."

"And methinks," replied the Varangian, "O most Christian Count, that such of your high rank as, by choice or fate, become the guests of such as I may think themselves pleased, and blame not their host's niggardliness, but the difficulty of his circumstances, if dinner should not present itself oftener than once in four-and-twenty hours." So saying, he clapped his hands together, and his domestic Edric entered. His guest looked astonished at the entrance of this third party into their retirement. "I will answer for this man," said Hereward, and addressed him in the following words: "What food hast thou, Edric, to place before the honorable Count?"

"Nothing but the cold pasty," replied the attendant, "marvelously damaged by your honor's encounter at breakfast."

The military domestic, as intimated, brought forward a large pasty, but which had already that morning sustained a furious attack, insomuch that Count Robert of Paris, who, like all noble Normans, was somewhat nice and delicate in his eating, was in some doubt whether his scrupulousness should not prevail over his hunger; but, on looking more closely, sight, smell, and a fast of twenty hours joined to convince him that the pasty was an excellent one, and that the charger on which it was presented possessed corners yet untouched. At length, having suppressed his scruples and made bold inroad upon the remains of the dish, he paused to partake of a flask of strong red wine which stood invitingly beside him, and a lusty draught increased the good-humor which had begun to take place towards Hereward, in exchange for the displeasure with which he had received him.

"Now, by Heaven!" he said, "I myself ought to be ashamed to lack the courtesy which I recommend to others. Here have I, with the manners of a Flemish boor, been devouring the provisions of my gallant host, without even asking him to sit down at his own table and to partake of his own good cheer!"

"I will not strain courtesies with you for that," said Hereward; and, thrusting his hand into the pasty, he proceeded with great speed and dexterity to devour the miscellaneous contents, a handful of which was inclosed in his grasp. The Count now withdrew from the table, partly in disgust at the

rustic proceedings of Hereward, who, however, by now calling Edric to join him in his attack upon the pasty, showed that he had, in fact, according to his manners, subjected himself previously to some observanee of respect towards his guest, while the assistance of his attendant enabled him to make a clear *caccabulum* of what was left. Count Robert at length summoned up courage sufficient to put a question which had been trembling upon his lips ever since Hereward had returned.

"Have thine inquiries, my gallant friend, learned more concerning my unfortunate wife, my faithful Brenhilda?"

"Tidings I have," said the Anglo-Saxon, "but whether pleasing or not, yourself must be the judge. This much I have learned: she hath, as you know, come under an engagement to meet the Cæsar in arms in the lists, but under conditions which you may perhaps think strange; these, however, she hath entertained without scruple."

"Let me know these terms," said the Count of Paris; "they will, I think, appear less strange in my eyes than in thine." But while he affected to speak with the utmost coolness, the husband's sparkling eye and crimsoned cheek betrayed the alteration which had taken place in his feelings.

"The lady and the Cæsar," said Hereward, "as you partly heard yourself, are to meet in fight; if the Countess wins, of course she remains the wife of the noble Count of Paris; if she loses, she becomes the paramour of the Cæsar Nicephorus Briennius."

"Saints and angels forbid!" said Count Robert; "were they to permit such treason to triumph, we might be pardoned for doubting their divinity."

"Yet methinks," said the Anglo-Saxon, "it were no disgraceful precaution that both you and I, with other friends, if we can obtain such, should be seen under shield in the lists on the morning of the conflict. To triumph or to be defeated is in the hand of fate; but what we cannot fail to witness is, whether or not the lady receives that fair-play which is the due of an honorable combatant, andwhich, as you have yourself seen, can be sometimes basely transgressed in this Grecian empire."

"On that condition," said the Count, "and protesting that not even the extreme danger of my lady shall make me break through the rule of a fair fight, I will surely attend the lists, if thou, brave Saxon, canst find me any means of doing so. Yet stay," he continued, after reflecting for a moment, "thou shalt promise not to let her know that her

count is on the field, far less to point him out to her eye among the press of warriors. O, thou dost not know that the sight of the beloved will sometimes steal from us our courage, even when it has most to achieve!"

"We will endeavor," said the Varangian, "to arrange matters according to thy pleasure, so that thou findest out no more fantastical difficulties; for, by my word, an affair so complicated in itself requires not to be confused by the fine-spun whims of thy national gallantry. Meantime, much must be done this night; and while I go about it, thou, sir knight, hadst best remain here, with such disguise of garments and such food as Edric may be able to procure for thee. Fear nothing from intrusion on the part of thy neighbors. We Varangians respect each other's secrets, of whatever nature they may chance to be."

CHAPTER XXI

But for our trusty brother-in-law, and the abbot,
With all the rest of that consorted crew,—
Destruction straight shall dog them at the heels.
Good uncle, help to order several powers
To Oxford, or where'er these traitors are,
They shall not live within this world, I swear.

Richard II.

As Hereward spoke the last words narrated in the foregoing chapter, he left the Count in his apartment, and proceeded to the Blacquernal Palace. We traced his first entrance into the court, but since then he had frequently been summoned, not only by order of the Princess Anna Comnena, who delighted in asking him questions concerning the customs of his native country, and marking down the replies in her own inflated language, but also by the direct command of the Emperor himself, who had the humor of many princes, that of desiring to obtain direct information from persons in a very inferior station in their court. The ring which the Princess had given to the Varangian served as a pass-token more than once, and was now so generally known by the slaves of the palace, that Hereward had only to slip it into the hand of a principal person among them, and was introduced into a small chamber, not distant from the saloon already mentioned, dedicated to the Muses. In this small apartment, the Emperor, his spouse Irene, and their accomplished daughter Anna Comnena were seated together, clad in very ordinary apparel, as indeed the furniture of the room itself was of the kind used by respectable citizens, saving that mattresses, composed of eider-down, hung before each door to prevent the risk of eavesdropping.

"Our trusty Varangian," said the Empress.

"My guide and tutor respecting the manners of those steelclad men," said the Princess Anna Comnena, "of whom it is so necessary that I should form an accurate idea."

"Your Imperial Majesty," said the Empress, "will not, I trust, think your consort and your muse-inspired daughter are too many to share with you the intelligence brought by this brave and loyal man?"

"Dearest wife and daughter," returned the Emperor, "I have hitherto spared you the burden of a painful secret, which I have locked in my own bosom, at whatever expense of solitary sorrow and unimparted anxiety. Noble daughter, you in particular will feel this calamity, learning, as you must learn, to think odiously of one of whom it has hitherto been your duty to hold a very different opinion."

"Holy Mary!" exclaimed the Princess.

"Rally yourself," said the Emperor; "remember you are a child of the purple chamber, born not to weep for your father's wrongs, but to avenge them; not to regard even him who has lain by your side as half so important as the sacred imperial grandeur, of which you are yourself a partaker."

"What can such words preface?" said Anna Comnena, in great agitation.

"They say," answered the Emperor, "that the Cæsar is an ungrateful man to all my bounties, and even to that which annexed him to my own house, and made him by adoption my own son. He hath consorted himself with a knot of traitors, whose very names are enough to raise the foul fiend, as if to snatch his assured prey."

"Could Nicephorus do this?" said the astonished and forlorn Princess—"Nicephorus, who has so often called my eyes the lights by which he steered his path? Could he do this to my father, to whose exploits he has listened hour after hour, protesting that he knew not whether it was the beauty of the language or the heroism of the action which most enchanted him? Thinking with the same thought, seeing with the same eye, loving with the same heart—O, my father! it is impossible that he could be so false. Think of the neighboring temple of the Muses."

"And if I did," murmured Alexius in his heart, "I should think of the only apology which could be proposed for the traitor. A little is well enough, but the full soul loatheth the honeycomb." Then speaking aloud, "My daughter," he said, "be comforted. We ourselves were unwilling to believe the shameful truth; but our guards have been debauched; their commander, that ungrateful Achilles Tatius, with the equal traitor, Agelastes, has been seduced to favor our imprisonment or murder; and, alas for Greece! in the very moment when she required the fostering care of a parent, she was to be deprived of him by a sudden and merciless blow."

Here the Emperor wept, whether for the loss to be

sustained by his subjects or of his own life it is hard to say.

"Methinks," said Irene, "your Imperial Highness is slow in taking measures against the danger."

"Under your gracious permission, mother," answered the Princess, "I would rather say he was hasty in giving belief to it. Methinks the evidence of a Varangian, granting him to be ever so stout a man-at-arms, is but a frail guaranty against the honor of your son-in-law, the approved bravery and fidelity of the captain of your guards, the deep sense, virtue, and profound wisdom of the greatest of your philosophers——"

"And the conceit of an over-educated daughter," said the Emperor, "who will not allow her parent to judge in what most concerns him. I will tell thee, Anna, I know every one of them, and the trust which may be reposed in them: the honor of your Nicephorus, the bravery and fidelity of the Acolyte, and the virtue and wisdom of Agelastes—have I not had them all in my purse? And had my purse continued well filled, and my arm strong as it was of late, there they would have still remained. But the butterflies went off as the weather became cold, and I must meet the tempest without their assistance. You talk of want of proof? I have proof sufficient when I see danger: this honest soldier brought me indications which corresponded with my own private remarks, made on purpose. Varangian he shall be of Varangians; Acolyte he shall be named, in place of the present traitor; and who knows what may come thereafter?"

"May it please your Highness," said the Varangian, who had been hitherto silent, "many men in this empire rise to dignity by the fall of their original patrons, but it is a road to greatness to which I cannot reconcile my conscience; moreover, having recovered a friend from whom I was long ago separated, I shall require, in short space, your imperial license for going hence, where I shall leave thousands of enemies behind me, and, spending my life, like many of my countrymen, under the banner of King William of Scotland——"

"Part with *thee*, most inimitable man!" cried the Emperor, with emphasis; "where shall I get a soldier—a champion—a friend, so faithful?"

"Noble sir," replied the Anglo-Saxon, "I am every way sensible to your goodness and munificence; but let me entreat you to call me by my own name, and to promise me nothing but your forgiveness for my having been the agent

of such confusion among your imperial servants. Not only is the threatened fate of Achilles Tatius, my benefactor; of the Cæsar, whom I think my well-wisher; and even of Agelastes himself, painful, so far as it is of my bringing round; but also I have known it somehow happen that those on whom your Imperial Majesty has lavished the most valuable expressions of your favor one day were the next day food to fatten the chough and crow. And this, I acknowledge, is a purpose for which I would not willingly have it said I have brought my English limbs to these Grecian shores."

"Call thee by thine own name, my Edward," said the Emperor (while he muttered aside, "By Heaven, I have again forgot the name of the barbarian!")—"by thine own name certainly for the present, but only until we shall devise one more fitted for the trust we repose in thee. Meantime, look at this scroll, which contains, I think, all the particulars which we have been able to learn of this plot, and give it to these unbelieving women, who will not credit that an emperor is in danger till the blades of the conspirators' poniards are clashing within his ribs."

Hereward did as he was commanded, and having looked at the scroll, and signified, by bending his head, his acquiescence in its contents, he presented it to Irene, who had not read long ere, with a countenance so embittered that she had difficulty in pointing out the cause of her displeasure to her daughter, she bade her, with animation, "Read that—read that, and judge of the gratitude and affection of thy Cæsar."

The princess Anna Comnena awoke from a state of profound and overpowering melancholy, and looked at the passage pointed out to her, at first with an air of languid curiosity, which presently deepened into the most intense interest. She clutched the scroll as a falcon does his prey, her eye lightened with indignation; and it was with the cry of the bird when in fury that she exclaimed, "Bloody-minded, double-hearted traitor! what wouldst thou have? Yes, father," she said, rising in fury, "it is no longer the voice of a deceived princess that shall intercede to avert from the traitor Nicephorus the doom he has deserved. Did he think that one born in the purple chamber could be divorced—murdered perhaps—with the petty formula of the Romans, 'Restore the keys, be no longer my domestic drudge'?* Was a daughter of the blood of

* The laconic form of the Roman divorce.

Comnenus liable to such insults as the meanest of Quirites might bestow on a family housekeeper?"

So saying, she dashed the tears from her eyes, and her countenance, naturally that of beauty and gentleness, became animated with the expression of a fury. Hereward looked at her with a mixture of fear, dislike, and compassion. She again burst forth, for nature, having given her considerable abilities, had lent her at the same time an energy of passion far superior in power to the cold ambition of Irene, or the wily, ambidexter, shuffling policy of the Emperor.

"He shall abye it," said the Princess—"he shall dearly abye it! False, smiling, cozening traitor! and for that unfeminine barbarian! Something of this I guessed even at that old fool's banqueting-house; and yet if this unworthy Cæsar submits his body to the chance of arms, he is less prudent than I have some reason to believe. Think you he will have the madness to brand us with such open neglect, my father? and will you not invent some mode of ensuring our revenge?"

"Soh!" thought the Emperor, "this difficulty is over: she will run downhill to her revenge, and will need the snaffle and curb more than the lash. If every jealous dame in Constantinople were to pursue her fury as unrelentingly, our laws should be written, like Draco's, not in ink, but in blood. Attend to me now," he said aloud, "my wife, my daughter, and thou, dear Edward, and you shall learn, and you three only, my mode of navigating the vessel of the state through these shoals."

"Let us see distinctly," continued Alexius, "the means by which they propose to act, and these shall instruct us how to meet them. A certain number of the Varangians are unhappily seduced, under pretense of wrongs, artfully stirred up by their villainous general. A part of them are studiously to be arranged nigh our person. The traitor Ursel, some of them suppose, is dead; but if it were so, his name is sufficient to draw together his old factionaries. I have a means of satisfying them on that point, on which I shall remain silent for the present. A considerable body of the Immortal Guards have also given way to seduction; they are to be placed to support the handful of treacherous Varangians, who are in the plot to attack our person. Now, a slight change in the stations of the soldiery, which thou, my faithful Edward—or—a—a—whatever thou art named—for which thou, I say, shalt have full authority, will derange the plans of the traitors, and place the true men in such

position around them as to cut them to pieces with little trouble."

"And the combat, my lord?" said the Saxon.

"Thou hadst been no true Varangian hadst thou not inquired after that," said the Emperor, nodding good-humoredly towards him. "As to the combat, the Cæsar has devised it, and it shall be my care that he shall not retreat from the dangerous part of it. He cannot in honor avoid fighting with this woman, strange as the combat is; and however it ends, the conspiracy will break forth, and as assuredly as it comes against persons prepared and in arms shall it be stifled in the blood of the conspirators."

"My revenge does not require this," said the Princess; "and your imperial honor is also interested that this countess shall be protected."

"It is little business of mine," said the Emperor. "She comes here with her husband altogether uninivited. He behaves with insolence in my presence, and deserves whatever may be the issue to himself or his lady of their mad adventure. In sooth, I desired little more than to give him a fright with those animals whom their ignorance judged enchanted, and to give his wife a slight alarm about the impetuosity of a Grecian lover, and there my vengeance should have ended. But it may be that his wife may be taken under my protection, now that little revenge is over."

"And a paltry revenge it was," said the Empress, "that you, a man past middle life, and with a wife who might command some attention, should constitute yourself the object of alarm to such a handsome man as Count Robert, and the amazon his wife."

"By your favor, dame Irene, no," said the Emperor. "I left that part of the proposed comedy to my son-in-law the Cæsar."

But when the poor Emperor had in some measure stopped one floodgate, he effectually opened another, and one which was more formidable. "The more shame to your imperial wisdom, my father!" exclaimed the Princess Anna Comnena, "it is a shame that, with wisdom and a beard like yours, you should be meddling in such indecent follies as admit disturbance into private families, and that family your own daughter's. Who can say that the Cæsar Nicephorus Briennius ever looked astray towards another woman than his wife till the Emperor taught him to do so, and involved him in a web of intrigue and treachery, in which he has endangered the life of his father-in-law?"

"Daughter—daughter—daughter!" said the Empress; "daughter of a she-wolf, I think, to goad her parent at such an unhappy time, when all the leisure he has is too little to defend his life!"

"Peace, I pray you, women both, with your senseless clamors," answered Alexius, "and let me at least swim for my life undisturbed with your folly. God knows if I am a man to encourage, I will not say the reality of wrong, but even its mere appearance."

These words he uttered, crossing himself, with a devout groan. His wife Irene, in the mean time, stepped before him, and said, with a bitterness in her looks and accent which only long-concealed nuptial hatred breaking forth at once could convey—"Alexius, terminate this affair how it will, you have lived a hypocrite, and thou wilt not fail to die one." So saying, with an air of noble indignation, and carrying her daughter along with her, she swept out of the apartment.

The Emperor looked after her with some confusion. He soon, however, recovered his self-possession, and turning to Hereward, with a look of injured majesty, said, "Ah! my dear Edward"—for the word had become rooted in his mind instead of the less euphonic name of Hereward—"thou seest how it is even with the greatest, and that the Emperor, in moments of difficulty, is a subject of misconstruction, as well as the meanest burgess of Constantinople; nevertheless, my trust is so great in thee, Edward, that I would have thee believe that my daughter, Anna Comnena, is not of the temper of her mother, but rather of my own; honoring, thou mayst see, with religious fidelity, the unworthy ties which I hope soon to break, and assort her with other fetters of Cupid which shall be borne more lightly. Edward, my main trust is in thee. Accident presents us with an opportunity, happy of the happiest so it be rightly improved, of having all the traitors before us assembled on one fair field. Think, *then*, on that day, as the Franks say at their tournaments, that fair eyes behold thee. Thou canst not devise a gift within my power but I will gladly load thee with it."

"It needs not," said the Varangian, somewhat coldly: "my highest ambition is to merit the epitaph upon my tomb, 'Hereward was faithful.' I am about, however, to demand a proof of your imperial confidence, which, perhaps, you may think a startling one."

"Indeed!" said the Emperor. "What, in one word, is thy demand?"

"Permission," replied Hereward, "to go to the Duke of

Bouillon's encampment, and entreat his presence in the lists, to witness this extraordinary combat."

"That he may return with his crusading madmen," said the Emperor, "and sack Constantinople, under pretense of doing justice to his confederates? This, Varangian, is at least speaking thy mind openly."

"No, by Heaven!" said Hereward, suddenly; "the Duke of Bouillon shall come with no more knights than may be a reasonable guard, should treachery be offered to the Countess of Paris."

"Well, even in this," said the Emperor, "will I be conformable; and if thou, Edward, betrayest my trust, think that thou forfeitest all that my friendship has promised, and dost incur, besides, the damnation that is due to the traitor who betrays with a kiss."

"For thy reward, noble sir," answered the Varangian, "I hereby renounce all claim to it. When the diadem is once more firmly fixed upon thy brow, and the scepter in thy hand, if I am then alive, if my poor services should deserve so much, I will petition thee for the means of leaving this court, and returning to the distant island in which I was born. Meanwhile, think me not unfaithful, because I have for a time the means of being so with effect. Your Imperial Highness shall learn that Hereward is as true as is your right hand to your left." So saying, he took his leave with a profound obeisance.

The Emperor gazed after him with a countenance in which doubt was mingled with admiration.

"I have trusted him," he said, "with all he asked, and with the power of ruining me entirely, if such be his purpose. He has but to breathe a whisper, and the whole mad crew of crusaders, kept in humor at the expense of so much current falsehood and so much more gold, will return with fire and sword to burn down Constantinople, and sow with salt the place where it stood. I have done what I had resolved never to do: I have ventured kingdom and life on the faith of a man born of woman. How often have I said, nay, sworn, that I would not hazard myself on such peril, and yet, step by step, I have done so! I cannot tell—there is in that man's looks and words a good faith which overwhelms me; and, what is almost incredible, my belief in him has increased in proportion to his showing me how slight my power was over him. I threw, like the wily angler, every bait I could devise, and some of them such as a king would scarcely have disdained. To none of these would he rise; but yet he

gorges, I may say, the bare hook, and enters upon my service without a shadow of self-interest. Can this be double-distilled treachery? or can it be what men call disinterestedness? If I thought him false, the moment is not yet past: he has not yet crossed the bridge—he has not passed the guards of the palace, who have no hesitation and know no disobedience. But no; I were then alone in the land, and without a friend or confidant. I hear the sound of the outer gate unclose: the sense of danger certainly renders my ears more acute than usual. It shuts again; the die is cast. He is at liberty; and Alexius Comnenus must stand or fall, according to the uncertain faith of a mercenary Varangian." He clapped his hands; a slave appeared, of whom he demanded wine. He drank, and his heart was cheered within him. "I am decided," he said, "and will abide with resolution the cast of the throw, for good or for evil."

So saying, he retired to his apartment, and was not again seen during that night.

CHAPTER XXII

And aye, as if for death, some lonely trumpet peal'd.
CAMPBELL.

THE Varangian, his head agitated with the weighty matters which were imposed on him, stopped from time to time as he journeyed through the moonlight streets, to arrest passing ideas as they shot through his mind, and consider them with accuracy in all their bearings. His thoughts were such as animated or alarmed him alternately, each followed by a confused throng of accompaniments which it suggested, and banished again in its turn by reflections of another description. It was one of those conjunctures when the minds of ordinary men feel themselves unable to support a burden which is suddenly flung upon them, and when, on the contrary those of uncommon fortitude, and that best of Heaven's gifts, good sense, founded on presence of mind, feel their talents awakened and regulated for the occasion, like a good steed under the management of a rider of courage and experience.

As he stood in one of those fits of reverie which repeatedly during that night arrested his stern military march, Hereward thought that his ear caught the note of a distant trumpet. This surprised him: a trumpet blown at that late hour, and in the streets of Constantinople, argued something extraordinary; for, as all the military movements were the subject of special ordinance, the etiquette of the night could hardly have been transgressed without some great cause. The question was, what that cause could be?

Had the insurrection broken out unexpectedly, and in a different manner from what the conspirators proposed to themselves? If so, his meeting with his plighted bride, after so many years' absence, was but a delusive preface to their separating forever. Or had the crusaders, a race of men upon whose motions it was difficult to calculate, suddenly taken arms and returned from the opposite shore to surprise the city? This might very possibly be the case; so numerous had been the different causes of complaint afforded

to the crusaders, that, when they were now for the first time assembled into one body, and had heard the stories which they could reciprocally tell concerning the perfidy of the Greeks, nothing was so likely, so natural, even perhaps so justifiable, as that they should study revenge.

But the sound rather resembled a point of war regularly blown than the tumultuous blare of bugle-horns and trumpets, the accompaniments at once and the annunciation of a taken town, in which the horrid circumstances of storm had not yet given place to such stern peace as the victors' weariness of slaughter and rapine allows at length to the wretched inhabitants. Whatever it was, it was necessary that Hereward should learn its purport, and therefore he made his way into a broad street near the barracks, from which the sound seemed to come, to which point, indeed, his way was directed for other reasons.

The inhabitants of that quarter of the town did not appear violently startled by this military signal. The moonlight slept on the street, crossed by the gigantic shadowy towers of Sancta Sophia. No human being appeared in the streets, and such as for an instant looked from their doors or from their lattices seemed to have their curiosity quickly satisfied, for they withdrew their heads, and secured the opening through which they had peeped.

Hereward could not help remembering the traditions which were recounted by the fathers of his tribe, in the deep woods of Hampshire, and which spoke of invisible huntsmen, who were heard to follow with viewless horses and hounds the unseen chase through the depths of the forests of Germany. Such it seemed were the sounds with which these haunted woods were wont to ring while the wild chase was up, and with such apparent terror did the hearers listen to their clamor.

"Fie!" he said, as he suppressed within him a tendency to the same superstitious fear; "do such childish fancies belong to a man trusted with so much, and from whom so much is expected?" He paced down the street, therefore, with his battle-ax over his shoulder, and the first person whom he saw venturing to look out of his door he questioned concerning the cause of this military music at such an unaccustomed hour.

"I cannot tell, so please you, my lord," said the citizen, unwilling, it appeared, to remain in the open air or to enter into conversation, and greatly disposed to decline further questioning. This was the political citizen of Constanti-

nople whom we met with at the beginning of this history, and who, hastily stepping into his habitation, eschewed all further conversation.

The wrestler Stephanos showed himself at the next door; which was garlanded with oak and ivy leaves, in honor of some recent victory. He stood unshrinking, partly encouraged by the consciousness of personal strength, and partly by a rugged surliness of temper, which is often mistaken among persons of this kind for real courage. His admirer and flatterer, Lysimachus, kept himself ensconced behind his ample shoulders.

As Hereward passed, he put the same question as he did to the former citizen—"Know you the meaning of these trumpets sounding so late?"

"You should know best yourself," answered Stephanos, doggedly; "for, to judge by your ax and helmet, they are your trumpets, and not ours, which disturb honest men in their first sleep."

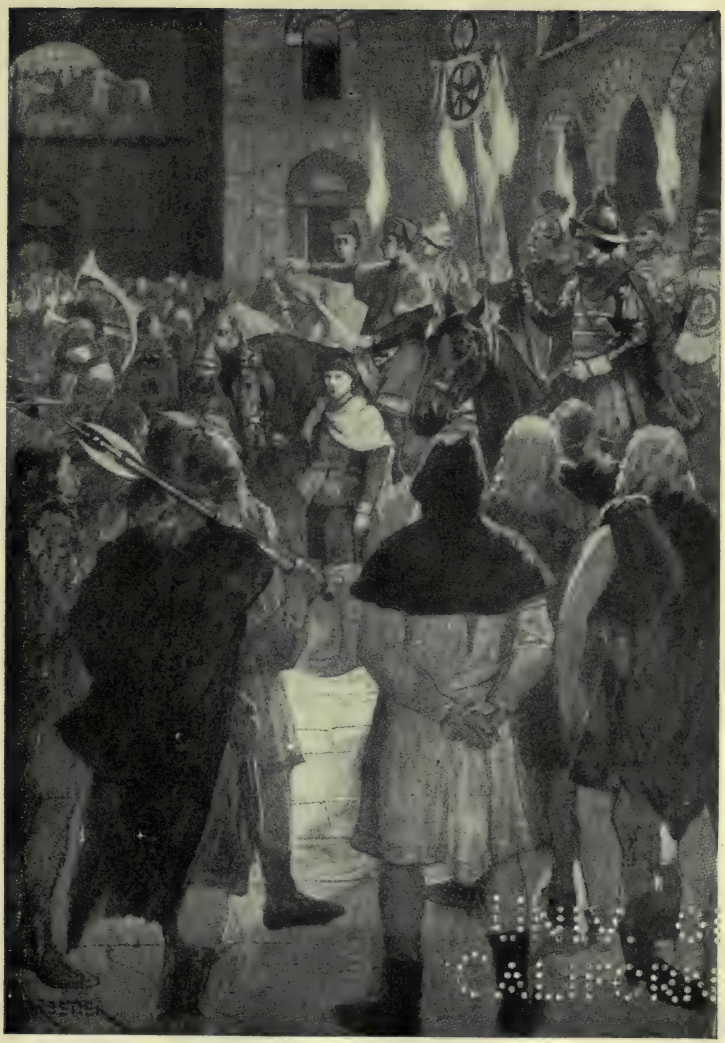
"Varlet!" answered the Varangian, with an emphasis which made the prizer start; "but—when that trumpet sounds, it is no time for a soldier to punish insolence as it deserves."

The Greek started back and bolted into his house, nearly overthrowing in the speed of his retreat the artist Lysimachus, who was listening to what passed.

Hereward passed on to the barracks, where the military music had seemed to halt; but on the Varangian crossing the threshold of the ample courtyard, it broke forth again with a tremendous burst, whose clangor almost stunned him, though well accustomed to the sounds. "What is the meaning of this, Engelbrecht?" he said to the Varangian sentinel, who paced ax in hand before the entrance.

"The proclamation of a challenge and combat," answered Engelbrecht. "Strange things toward, comrade: the frantic crusaders have bit the Grecians, and infected them with their humor of tilting, as they say dogs do each other with madness."

Hereward made no reply to the sentinel's speech, but pressed forward into a knot of his fellow-soldiers who were assembled in the court, half-armed, or, more properly, in total disarray, as just arisen from their beds; and huddled around the trumpets of their corps, which were drawn out in full pomp. He of the gigantic instrument, whose duty it was to intimate the express commands of the emperor, was not wanting in his place, and the musicians were sup-



"The herald, after the flourish of trumpets was finished, commenced in these words."

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

ported by a band of the Varangians in arms, headed by Achilles Tatius himself. Hereward could also notice on approaching nearer, as his comrades made way for him, that six of the imperial heralds were on duty on this occasion; four of these (two acting at the same time) had already made proclamation, which was to be repeated for the third time by the two last, as was the usual fashion in Constantinople, with imperial mandates of great consequence. Achilles Tatius, the moment he saw his confidant, made him a sign, which Hereward understood as conveying a desire to speak with him after the proclamation was over.

The herald, after the flourish of trumpets was finished, commenced in these words:

"By the authority of the resplendent and divine Prince Alexius Comnenus, Emperor of the most holy Roman Empire, his Imperial Majesty desires it to be made known to all and sundry the subjects of his empire, whatever their race or blood may be, or at whatever shrine of divinity they happen to bend— Know ye, therefore, that upon the second day after this is dated, our beloved son-in-law, the much-esteemed Cæsar, hath taken upon him to do battle with our sworn enemy, Robert Count of Paris, on account of his insolent conduct, by presuming publicly to occupy our royal seat, and no less by breaking, in our imperial presence, those curious specimens of art, ornamenting our throne, called by tradition the Lions of Solomon. And that there may not remain a man in Europe who shall dare to say that the Grecians are behind other parts of the world in any of the manly exercises which Christian nations use, the said noble enemies, renouncing all assistance from falsehood, from spells, or from magic, shall debate this quarrel in three courses with grinded spears, and three passages of arms with sharpened swords; the field to be at the judgment of the honorable Emperor, and to be decided at his most gracious and unerring pleasure. And so God show the right!"

Another formidable flourish of the trumpets concluded the ceremony. Achilles then dismissed the attendant troops, as well as the heralds and musicians, to their respective quarters; and having got Hereward close to his side, inquired of him whether he had learned anything of the prisoner, Robert Count of Paris.

"Nothing," said the Varangian, "save the tidings your proclamation contains."

"You think, then," said Achilles, "that the Count has been a party to it?"

"He ought to have been so," answered the Varangian. "I know no one but himself entitled to take burden for his appearance in the lists."

"Why, look you," said the Acolyte, "my most excellent, though blunt-witted, Hereward, this Cæsar of ours hath had the extravagance to venture his tender wit in comparison to that of Achilles Tatius. He stands upon his honor, too, this ineffable fool, and is displeased with the idea of being supposed either to challenge a woman or to receive a challenge at her hand. He has substituted, therefore, the name of the lord instead of the lady. If the Count fail to appear, the Cæsar walks forward challenger and successful combatant at a cheap rate, since no one has encountered him, and claims that the lady should be delivered up to him as captive of his dreaded bow and spear. This will be the signal for a general tumult, in which, if the Emperor be not slain on the spot, he will be conveyed to the dungeon of his own Blacquernal, there to endure the doom which his cruelty has inflicted upon so many others."

"But——" said the Varangian.

"But—but—but," said his officer—"but thou art a fool. Canst thou not see that this gallant Cæsar is willing to avoid the risk of encountering with this lady, while he earnestly desires to be supposed willing to meet her husband? It is our business to fix the combat in such a shape as to bring all who are prepared for insurrection together in arms to play their parts. Do thou only see that our trusty friends are placed near to the Emperor's person, and in such a manner as to keep from him the officious and meddling portion of guards who may be disposed to assist him; and whether the Cæsar fights a combat with lord or lady, or whether there be any combat at all or not, the revolution shall be accomplished, and the Tatii shall replace the Comneni upon the imperial throne of Constantinople. Go, my trusty Hereward. Thou wilt not forget that the signal word of the insurrection is Ursel, who lives in the affections of the people, although his body, it is said, has long lain a corpse in the dungeons of the Blacquernal."

"What was this Ursel," said Hereward, "of whom I hear men talk so variously?"

"A competitor for the crown with Alexius Comnenus—good, brave, and honest; but overpowered by the cunning, rather than the skill or bravery, of his foe. He died, as I believe, in the Blacquernal; though when or how there are few that can say. But, up and be doing, my Hereward!

Speak encouragement to the Varangians. Interest whomsoever thou canst to join us. Of the Immortals, as they are called, and of the discontented citizens, enough are prepared to fill up the cry, and follow in the wake of those on whom we must rely as the beginners of the enterprise. No longer shall Alexius's cunning in avoiding popular assemblies avail to protect him: he cannot, with regard to his honor, avoid being present at a combat to be fought beneath his own eye; and Mercury be praised for the eloquence which inspired him, after some hesitation, to determine for the proclamation!"

"You have seen him, then, this evening?" said the Varangian.

"Seen him! Unquestionably," answered the Acolyte. "Had I ordered these trumpets to be sounded without his knowledge, the blast had blown the head from my shoulders."

"I had well-nigh met you at the palace," said Hereward, while his heart throbbed almost as high as if he had actually had such a dangerous encounter.

"I heard something of it," said Achilles—"that you came to take the parting orders of him who now acts the sovereign. Surely, had I seen you there, with that steadfast, open, seemingly honest countenance, cheating the wily Greek by very dint of bluntness, I had not forborne laughing at the contrast between that and the thoughts of thy heart."

"God alone," said Hereward, "knows the thoughts of our hearts; but I take Him to witness that I am faithful to my promise, and will discharge the task entrusted to me."

"Bravo! mine honest Anglo-Saxon," said Achilles. "I pray thee to call my slaves to unarm me; and when thou thyself doffest those weapons of an ordinary lifeguard's-man, tell them they never shall above twice more inclose the limbs of one for whom fate has much more fitting garments in store."

Hereward dared not entrust his voice with an answer to so critical a speech; he bowed profoundly, and retired to his own quarters in the building.

Upon entering the apartment, he was immediately saluted by the voice of Count Robert, in joyful accents, not suppressed by the fear of making himself heard, though prudence should have made that uppermost in his mind.

"Hast thou heard it, my dear Hereward," he said—"hast thou heard the proclamation, by which this Greek antelope

hath defied me to tilting with grinded spears, and fighting three passages of arms with sharpened swords? Yet there is something strange, too, that he should not think it safer to hold my lady to the encounter? He may think, perhaps, that the crusaders would not permit such a battle to be fought. But, by Our Lady of the Broken Lances! he little knows that the men of the West hold their ladies' character for courage as jealously as they do their own. This whole night have I been considering in what armor I shall clothe me, what shift I shall make for a steed, and whether I shall not honor him sufficiently by using Tranchefer, as my only weapon, against his whole armor, offensive and defensive."

"I shall take care, however," said Hereward, "that thou art better provided in case of need. Thou knowest not the Greeks."

CHAPTER XXIII

THE Varangian did not leave the Count of Paris until the latter had placed in his hands his signet-ring, *semé*, as the heralds express it, with lances splintered, and bearing the proud motto, "Mine yet unscathed." Provided with this symbol of confidence, it was now his business to take order for communicating the approaching solemnity to the leader of the crusading army, and demanding for him, in the name of Robert of Paris and the Lady Brenhilda, such a detachment of Western cavaliers as might ensure strict observance of honor and honesty in the arrangement of the lists and during the progress of the combat. The duties imposed on Hereward were such as to render it impossible for him to proceed personally to the camp of Godfrey; and though there were many of the Varangians in whose fidelity he could have trusted, he knew of none among those under his immediate command whose intelligence, on so novel an occasion, might be entirely depended on. In this perplexity he strolled, perhaps without well knowing why, to the gardens of Agelastes, where fortune once more produced him an interview with Bertha.

No sooner had Hereward made her aware of his difficulty than the faithful bower-maiden's resolution was taken.

"I see," said she, "that the peril of this part of the adventure must rest with me; and wherefore should it not? My mistress, in the bosom of prosperity, offered herself to go forth into the wide world for my sake; I will for hers go to the camp of this Frankish lord. He is an honorable man and a pious Christian, and his followers are faithful pilgrims. A woman can have nothing to fear who goes to such men upon such an errand."

The Varangian, however, was too well acquainted with the manners of camps to permit the fair Bertha to go alone. He provided, therefore, for her safeguard a trusty old soldier, bound to his person by long kindness and confidence; and having thoroughly possessed her of the particulars of the message she was to deliver, and desired her to be in readiness without the inclosure at peep of dawn, returned once more to his barracks.

With the earliest light, Hereward was again at the spot where he had parted over night with Bertha, accompanied by the honest soldier to whose care he meant to confide her. In a short time, he had seen them safely on board of a ferry-boat lying in the harbor, the master of which readily admitted them, after some examination of their license, to pass to Scutari, which was forged in the name of the Acolyte, as authorized by that foul conspirator, and which agreed with the appearance of old Osmund and his young charge.

The morning was lovely, and ere long the town of Scutari opened on the view of the travelers, glittering, as now, with a variety of architecture, which, though it might be termed fantastical, could not be denied the praise of beauty. These buildings rose boldly out of a thick grove of cypresses and other huge trees, the larger, probably, as they were respected for filling the cemeteries and being the guardians of the dead.

At the period we mention, another circumstance, no less striking than beautiful, rendered doubly interesting a scene which must have been at all times greatly so. A large portion of that miscellaneous army which came to regain the holy places of Palestine, and the blessed Sepulcher itself, from the infidels had established themselves in a camp within a mile or thereabouts of Scutari. Although, therefore, the crusaders were destitute in a great measure of the use of tents, the army (excepting the pavilions of some leaders of high rank) had constructed for themselves temporary huts, not unpleasing to the eye, being decorated with leaves and flowers, while the tall pennons and banners that floated over them with various devices showed that the flower of Europe were assembled at that place. A loud and varied murmur, resembling that of a thronged hive, floated from the camp of the crusaders to the neighboring town of Scutari, and every now and then the deep tone was broken by some shriller sound, the note of some musical instrument, or the treble scream of some child or female, in fear or in gaiety.

The party at length landed in safety; and as they approached one of the gates of the camp, there sallied forth a brisk array of gallant cavaliers, pages, and squires, exercising their masters' horses or their own. From the noise they made, conversing at the very top of their voices, galloping, curvetting, and prancing their palfreys, it seemed as if their early discipline had called them to exercise ere the fumes of last night's revel were thoroughly dissipated

by repose. So soon as they saw Bertha and her party, they approached them with cries which marked their country was Italy—"*All' erta! all' erta! Roba de guadagno, cameradi!*" *

They gathered round the Anglo-Saxon maiden and her companions, repeating their cries in a manner which made Bertha tremble. Their general demand was, "What was her business in their camp?"

"I would to the general-in-chief, cavaliers," answered Bertha, "having a secret message to his ear."

"For whose ear?" said a leader of the party, a handsome youth of about eighteen years of age, who seemed either to have a sounder brain than his fellows, or to have overflowed it with less wine. "Which of our leaders do you come hither to see?" he demanded.

"Godfrey of Bouillon."

"Indeed!" said the page who had spoken first; "can nothing of less consequence serve thy turn? Take a look amongst us; young are we all, and reasonably wealthy. My lord of Bouillon is old, and if he has any sequins, he is not like to lavish them in this way."

"Still I have a token to Godfrey of Bouillon," answered Bertha, "an assured one; and he will little thank any who obstructs my free passage to him;" and therewithal showing a little case, in which the signet of the Count of Paris was inclosed, "I will trust it in your hands," she said, "if you promise not to open it, but to give me free access to the noble leader of the crusaders."

"I will," said the youth, "and if such be the Duke's pleasure, thou shalt be admitted to him."

"Ernest the Apulian, thy dainty Italian wit is caught in a trap," said one of his companions.

"Thou art an ultramontane fool, Polydore," returned Ernest; "there may be more in this than either thy wit or mine is able to fathom. This maiden and one of her attendants wear a dress belonging to the Varangian Imperial Guard. They have perhaps been entrusted with a message from the Emperor, and it is not irreconcilable with Alexius's politics to send it through such messengers as these. Let us, therefore, convey them in all honor to the general's tent."

"With all my heart," said Polydore. "A blue-eyed wench is a pretty thing, but I like not the sauce of the camp-marshal, nor his taste in attiring men who give way

* That is, "Take heed! take heed! There is booty, comrades!"

to temptation.* Yet, ere I prove a fool like my companion, I would ask who or what this pretty maiden is, who comes to put noble princes and holy pilgrims in mind that they have in their time had the follies of men ?"

Bertha advanced and whispered in the ear of Ernest. Meantime joke followed jest, among Polydore and the rest of the gay youths, in riotous and ribald succession, which, however characteristic of the rude speakers, may as well be omitted here. Their effect was to shake in some degree the fortitude of the Saxon maiden, who had some difficulty in mustering courage to address them. "As you have mothers, gentlemen," she said, "as you have fair sisters, whom you would protect from dishonor with your best blood, as you love and honor those holy places which you have sworn to free from the infidel enemy, have compassion on me, that you may merit success in your undertaking!"

"Fear nothing, maiden," said Ernest, "I will be your protector; and you, my comrades, be ruled by me. I have, during your brawling, taken a view, though somewhat against my promise, of the pledge which she bears, and if she who presents it is affronted or maltreated, be assured Godfrey of Bouillon will severely avenge the wrong done her."

"Nay, comrade, if thou canst warrant us so much," said Polydore, "I will myself be most anxious to conduct the young woman in honor and safety to Sir Godfrey's tent."

"The princes," said Ernest, "must be nigh meeting there in council. What have I said I will warrant and uphold with hand and life. More I might guess, but I conclude this sensible young maiden can speak for herself."

"Now, Heaven bless thee, gallant squire," said Bertha, "and make thee alike brave and fortunate! Embarrass yourself no farther about me than to deliver me safe to your leader Godfrey."

"We spend time," said Ernest, springing from his horse. "You are no soft Eastern, fair maid, and I presume you will find yourself under no difficulty in managing a quiet horse ?"

"Not the least," said Bertha, as, wrapping herself in her cassock, she sprung from the ground, and alighted upon the spirited palfrey as a linnet stoops upon a rosebush. "And now, sir, as my business really brooks no delay, I will be indebted to you to show me instantly to the tent of Duke Godfrey of Bouillon."

* See Crusaders' Punishment. Note 9.

By availing herself of this courtesy of the young Apulian, Bertha imprudently separated herself from the old Varangian ; but the intentions of the youth were honorable, and he conducted her through the tents and huts to the pavilion of the celebrated general-in-chief of the crusade.

" Here," he said, " you must tarry for a space, under the guardianship of my companions (for two or three of the pages had accompanied them, out of curiosity to see the issue), and I will take the commands of the Duke of Bouillon upon the subject."

To this nothing could be objected, and Bertha had nothing better to do than to admire the outside of the tent, which, in one of Alexius's fits of generosity and munificence, had been presented by the Greek emperor to the chief of the Franks. It was raised upon tall spear-shaped poles, which had the semblance of gold ; its curtains were of a thick stuff, manufactured of silk, cotton, and gold thread. The warders who stood round were (at least during the time that the council was held) old, grave men, the personal squires of the body, most of them, of the sovereigns who had taken the cross, and who could therefore, be trusted as a guard over the assembly, without danger of their blabbing what they might overhear. Their appearance was serious and considerate, and they looked like men who had taken upon them the cross, not as an idle adventure of arms, but as a purpose of the most solemn and serious nature. One of these stopped the Italian, and demanded what business authorized him to press forward into the council of the crusaders, who were already taking their seats. The page answered by giving his name, " Ernest of Otranto, page of Prince Tancred ;" and stated that he announced a young woman, who bore a token of the Duke of Bouillon, adding that it was accompanied by a message for his own ear.

Bertha, meantime, laid aside her mantle, or upper garment, and disposed the rest of her dress according to the Anglo-Saxon costume. She had hardly completed this task before the page of Prince Tancred returned, to conduct her into the presence of the council of the crusade. She followed his signal ; while the other young men who had accompanied her, wondering at the apparent ease with which she gained admittance, drew back to a respectful distance from the tent, and there canvassed the singularity of their morning's adventure.

In the meanwhile, the ambassadress herself entered the council-chamber, exhibiting an agreeable mixture of shame-

facedness and reserve, together with a bold determination to do her duty at all events. There were about fifteen of the principal crusaders assembled in council, with their chieftain Godfrey. He himself was a tall strong man, arrived at that period of life in which men are supposed to have lost none of their resolution, while they have acquired a wisdom and circumspection unknown to their earlier years. The countenance of Godfrey bespoke both prudence and boldness, and resembled his hair, where a few threads of silver were already mingled with his raven locks.

Tancred, the noblest knight of the Christian chivalry, sat at no great distance from him with Hugh Earl of Vermandois, generally called the Great Count, the selfish and wily Bohemond, the powerful Raymond of Provence, and others of the principal crusaders, all more or less completely sheathed in armor.

Bertha did not allow her courage to be broken down, but advancing with a timid grace towards Godfrey, she placed in his hands the signet, which had been restored to her by the young page, and, after a deep obeisance, spoke these words: "Godfrey, Count of Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine the Lower, chief of the holy enterprise called the crusade, and you, his gallant comrades, peers, and companions, by whatever titles you may be honored, I, an humble maiden of England, daughter of Engelred, originally a franklin of Hampshire, and since chieftain of the Foresters, or free Anglo-Saxons, under the command of the celebrated Ederic, do claim what credence is due to the bearer of the true pledge which I put into your hand, on the part of one not the least considerable of your own body, Count Robert of Paris——"

"Our most honorable confederate," said Godfrey, looking at the ring. "Most of you, my lords, must, I think, know this signet—a field sown with the fragments of many splintered lances." The signet was handed from one of the assembly to another, and generally recognized.

When Godfrey had signified so much, the maiden resumed her message. "To all true crusaders, therefore, comrades of Godfrey of Bouillon, and especially to the Duke himself —to all, I say, excepting Bohemond of Tarentum, whom he counts unworthy of his notice——"

"Hah! me unworthy of his notice," said Bohemond, "What mean you by that, damsel? But the Count of Paris shall answer it to me."

"Under your favor, Sir Bohemond," said Godfrey, "no. Our articles renounce the sending of challenges among our-

selves, and the matter, if not dropped betwixt the parties, must be referred to the voice of this honorable council."

"I think I guess the business now, my lord," said Bohemond. "The Count of Paris is disposed to turn and tear me, because I offered him good counsel on the evening before we left Constantinople, when he neglected to accept or be guided by it——"

"It will be the more easily explained when we have heard his message," said Godfrey. "Speak forth Lord Robert of Paris's charge, damsel, that we may take some order with that which now seems a perplexed business."

Bertha resumed her message; and, having briefly narrated the recent events, thus concluded: "The battle is to be done to-morrow, about two hours after daybreak, and the Count entreats of the noble Duke of Lorraine that he will permit some fifty of the lances of France to attend the deed of arms, and secure that fair and honorable conduct which he has otherwise some doubts of receiving at the hands of his adversary. Or if any young and gallant knight should, of his own free will, wish to view the said combat, the Count will feel his presence as an honor; always he desires that the name of such knight be numbered carefully with the armed crusaders who shall attend in the lists, and that the whole shall be limited, by Duke Godfrey's own inspection, to fifty lances only, which are enough to obtain the protection required, while more would be considered as a preparation for aggression upon the Grecians, and occasion the revival of disputes which are now happily at rest."

Bertha had no sooner finished delivering her manifesto, and made with great grace her obeisance to the council, than a sort of whisper took place in the assembly, which soon assumed a more lively tone.

Their solemn vow not to turn their back upon Palestine, now that they had set their hands to the plow, was strongly urged by some of the elder knights of the council, and two or three high prelates, who had by this time entered to take share in the deliberations. The young knights, on the other hand, were fired with indignation on hearing the manner in which their comrade had been trepanned; and few of them could think of missing a combat in the lists in a country in which such sights were so rare, and where one was to be fought so near them.

Godfry rested his brow on his hand, and seemed in great perplexity. To break with the Greeks, after having suffered so many injuries in order to maintain the advantage of keep-

ing the peace with them, seemed very impolitic, and a sacrifice of all he had obtained by a long course of painful forbearance towards Alexius Comnenus. On the other hand, he was bound as a man of honor to resent the injury offered to Count Robert of Paris, whose reckless spirit of chivalry made him the darling of the army. It was the cause, too, of a beautiful lady, and a brave one. Every knight in the host would think himself bound by his vow to hasten to her defense. When Godfrey spoke, it was to complain of the difficulty of the determination, and the short time there was to consider the case.

"With submission to my Lord Duke of Lorraine," said Tancred, "I was a knight ere I was a crusader, and took on me the vows of chivalry ere I placed this blessed sign upon my shoulder : the vow first made must be first discharged. I will therefore do penance for neglecting, for a space, the obligations of the second vow, while I observe that which recalls me to the first duty of knighthood—the relief of a distressed lady in the hands of men whose conduct towards her, and towards this host, in every respect entitles me to call them treacherous traitors."

"If my kinsman Tancred," said Bohemond, "will check his impetuosity, and you, my lords, will listen, as you have sometimes deigned to do, to my advice, I think I can direct you how to keep clear of any breach of your oath, and yet fully to relieve our distressed fellow-pilgrims. I see some suspicious looks are cast towards me, which are caused perhaps by the churlish manner in which this violent, and, in this case, almost insane, young warrior has protested against receiving my assistance. My great offense is the having given him warning, by precept and example, of the treachery which was about to be practised against him, and instructed him to use forbearance and temperance. My warning he altogether contemned, my example he neglected to follow, and fell into the snare which was spread, as it were, before his very eyes. Yet the Count of Paris, in rashly contemning me, has acted only from a temper which misfortune and disappointment have rendered irrational and frantic. I am so far from bearing him ill-will that, with your lordship's permission, and that of the present council, I will haste to the place of rendezvous with fifty lances, making up the retinue which attends upon each to at least ten men, which will make the stipulated auxiliary force equal to five hundred; and with these I can have little doubt of rescuing the Count and his lady."

"Nobly proposed," said the Duke of Bouillon, "and with a charitable forgiveness of injuries which becomes our Christian expedition. But thou hast forgot the main difficulty, brother Bohemond, that we are sworn never to turn back upon the sacred journey."

"If we can elude that oath upon the present occasion," said Bohemond, "it becomes our duty to do so. Are we such bad horsemen, or are our steeds so awkward, that we cannot rein them back from this to the landing-place at Scutari? We can get them on shipboard in the same retrograde manner, and when we arrive in Europe, where our vow binds us no longer, the Count and Countess of Paris are rescued, and our vow remains entire in the chancery of Heaven."

A general shout arose—"Long life to the gallant Bohemond! Shame to us if we do not fly to the assistance of so valiant a knight and a lady so lovely, since we can do so without breach of our vow."

"The question," said Godfrey, "appears to me to be eluded rather than solved; yet such evasions have been admitted by the most learned and scrupulous clerks; nor do I hesitate to admit of Bohemond's expedient, any more than if the enemy had attacked our rear, which might have occasioned our counter-marching to be a case of absolute necessity."

Some there were in the assembly, particularly the churchmen, inclined to think that the oath by which the crusaders had solemnly bound themselves ought to be as literally obeyed. But Peter the Hermit, who had a place in the council, and possessed great weight, declared it as his opinion, "That since the precise observance of their vow would tend to diminish the forces of the crusade, it was in fact unlawful, and should not be kept according to the literal meaning, if, by a fair construction, it could be eluded."

He offered himself to back the animal which he bestrode—that is, his ass; and though he was diverted from showing this example by the remonstrances of Godfrey of Bouillon, who was afraid of his becoming a scandal in the eyes of the heathen, yet he so prevailed by his arguments, that the knights, far from scrupling to counter-march, eagerly contended which should have the honor of making one of the party which should retrograde to Constantinople, see the combat, and bring back to the host in safety the valorous Count of Paris, of whose victory no one doubted, and his amazonian countess.

This emulation was also put an end to by the authority of Godfrey, who himself selected the fifty knights who were to compose the party. They were chosen from different nations, and the command of the whole was given to young Tancred of Otranto. Notwithstanding the claim of Bohemond, Godfrey detained the latter, under the pretext that his knowledge of the country and people was absolutely necessary to enable the council to form the plan of the campaign in Syria; but in reality he dreaded the selfishness of a man of great ingenuity as well as military skill, who, finding himself in a separate command, might be tempted, should opportunities arise, to enlarge his own power and dominion at the expense of the pious purposes of the crusade in general. The younger men of the expedition were chiefly anxious to procure such horses as had been thoroughly trained, and could go through with ease and temper the maneuver of equitation by which it was designed to render legitimate the movement which they had recourse to. The selection was at length made, and the detachment ordered to draw up in the rear, or upon the eastward line of the Christian encampment. In the meanwhile, Godfrey charged Bertha with a message for the Count of Paris, in which, slightly censuring him for not observing more caution in his intercourse with the Greeks, he informed him that he had sent a detachment of fifty lances, with the corresponding squires, pages, men-at-arms, and cross-bows, five hundred in number, commanded by the valiant Tancred, to his assistance. The Duke also informed him that he had added a suit of armor of the best temper Milan could afford, together with a trusty war-horse, which he entreated him to use upon the field of battle; for Bertha had not omitted to intimate Count Robert's want of the means of knightly equipment. The horse was brought before the pavilion accordingly, completely barbed or armed in steel, and laden with armor for the knight's body. Godfrey himself put the bridle into Bertha's hand.

"Thou need'st not fear to trust thyself with this steed: he is as gentle and docile as he is fleet and brave. Place thyself on his back, and take heed thou stir not from the side of the noble Prince Tancred of Otranto, who will be the faithful defender of a maiden that has this day shown dexterity, courage, and fidelity."

Bertha bowed low, as her cheeks glowed at praise from one whose talents and worth were in such general esteem as to have raised him to the distinguished situation of leader of a

host which numbered in it the bravest and most distinguished captains of Christendom."

"Who are yon two persons?" continued Godfrey, speaking of the companions of Bertha, whom he saw in the distance before the tent.

"The one," answered the damsel, "is the master of the ferry-boat which brought me over; and the other an old Varangian who came hither as my protector."

"As they may come to employ their eyes here, and their tongues on the opposite side," returned the general of the crusaders, "I do not think it prudent to let them accompany you. They shall remain here for some short time. The citizens of Scutari will not comprehend for some space what our intention is, and I could wish Prince Tancred and his attendants to be the first to announce their own arrival."

Bertha accordingly intimated the pleasure of the French general to the parties, without naming his motives; when the ferryman began to exclaim on the hardship of intercepting him in his trade, and Osmund to complain of being detained from his duties. But Bertha, by the orders of Godfrey, left them with the assurance that they would be soon at liberty. Finding themselves thus abandoned, each applied himself to his favorite amusement. The ferryman occupied himself in staring about at all that was new; and Osmund, having in the mean time accepted an offer of breakfast from some of the domestics, was presently engaged with a flask of such red wine as would have reconciled him to a worse lot than that which he at present experienced.

The detachment of Tancred, fifty spears and their armed retinue, which amounted fully to five hundred men, after having taken a short and hasty refreshment, were in arms and mounted before the sultry hour of noon. After some maneuvers, of which the Greeks of Scutari, whose curiosity was awakened by the preparations of the detachment, were at a loss to comprehend the purpose, they formed into a single column, having four men in front. When the horses were in this position, the whole riders at once began to rein back. The action was one to which both the cavaliers and their horses were well accustomed, nor did it at first afford much surprise to the spectators; but when the same retrograde evolution was continued, and the body of crusaders seemed about to enter the town of Scutari in so extraordinary a fashion, some idea of the truth began to occupy the citizens. The cry at length was general, when Tancred and a few others, whose horses were unusually well trained, arrived at

the port, and possessed themselves of a galley, into which they led their horses, and, disregarding all opposition from the imperial officers of the haven, pushed the vessel off from the shore.

Other cavaliers did not accomplish their purpose so easily; the riders, or the horses, were less accustomed to continue in the constrained pace for such a considerable length of time, so that many of the knights, having retrograded for one or two hundred yards, thought their vow was sufficiently observed by having so far deferred to it, and riding in the ordinary manner into the town, seized without further ceremony on some vessels, which, notwithstanding the orders of the Greek Emperor, had been allowed to remain on the Asiatic side of the strait. Some less able horsemen met with various accidents; for though it was a proverb of the time that nothing was so bold as a blind horse, yet from this mode of equitation, where neither horse nor rider saw the way he was going, some steeds were overthrown, others backed upon dangerous obstacles; and the bones of the cavaliers themselves suffered much more than would have been the case in an ordinary march.

Those horsemen, also, who met with falls incurred the danger of being slain by the Greeks, had not Godfrey, surmounting his religious scruples, despatched a squadron to extricate them, a task which they performed with great ease. The greater part of Tancred's followers succeeded in embarking, as was intended, nor was there more than a score or two finally amissing. To accomplish their voyage, however, even the Prince of Otranto himself, and most of his followers, were obliged to betake themselves to the unknightly labors of the oar. This they found extremely difficult, as well from the state both of the tide and the wind as from the want of practise at the exercise. Godfrey in person viewed their progress anxiously from a neighboring height, and perceived with regret the difficulty which they found in making their way, which was still more increased by the necessity for their keeping in a body, and waiting for the slowest and worst-manned vessels, which considerably detained those that were more expeditious. They made some progress, however; nor had the commander-in-chief the least doubt that before sunset they would safely reach the opposite side of the strait.

He retired at length from his post of observation, having placed a careful sentinel in his stead, with directions to bring him word the instant that the detachment reached the opposite shore. This the soldier could easily discern by

the eye, if it was daylight at the time; if, on the contrary, it was night before they could arrive, the Prince of Otranto had orders to show certain lights, which, in case of their meeting resistance from the Greeks, should be arranged in a peculiar manner, so as to indicate danger.

Godfrey then explained to the Greek authorities of Scutari, whom he summoned before him, the necessity there was that he should keep in readiness such vessels as could be procured, with which, in case of need, he was determined to transport a strong division from his army to support those who had gone before. He then rode back to his camp, the confused murmurs of which, rendered more noisy by the various discussions concerning the events of the day, rolled off from the numerous host of the crusaders, and mingled with the hoarse sound of the many-billowed Hellespont.

CHAPTER XXIV

All is prepared: the chambers of the mine
Are cramm'd with the combustible, which, harmless
While yet unkindled as the sable sand,
Needs but a spark to change its nature so
That he, who wakes it from its slumbrous mood,
Dreads scarce the explosion less than he who knows
That 'tis his towers which meet its fury.

Anonymous.

When the sky is darkened suddenly, and the atmosphere grows thick and stifling, the lower ranks of creation entertain the ominous sense of a coming tempest. The birds fly to the thickets, the wild creatures retreat to the closest covers which their instinct gives them the habit of frequenting, and domestic animals show their apprehension of the approaching thunderstorm by singular actions and movements inferring fear and disturbance.

It seems that human nature, when its original habits are cultivated and attended to, possesses, on similar occasions, something of that prescient foreboding which announces the approaching tempest to the inferior ranks of creation. The cultivation of our intellectual powers goes perhaps too far when it teaches us entirely to suppress and disregard those natural feelings which were originally designed as sentinels by which nature warned us of impending danger.

Something of the kind, however, still remains, and that species of feeling which announces to us sorrowful or alarming tidings may be said, like the prophecies of the weird sisters, to come over us like a sudden cloud.

During the fatal day which was to precede the combat of the Cæsar with the Count of Paris, there were current through the city of Constantinople the most contradictory, and at the same time the most terrific, reports. Privy conspiracy, it was alleged, was on the very eve of breaking out; open war, it was reported by others, was about to shake her banners over the devoted city; the precise cause was not agreed upon, any more than the nature of the enemy. Some said that the barbarians from the borders of Thracia, the Hungarians, as they were termed, and the Comani were on

their march from the frontiers to surprise the city; another report stated that the Turks, who during this period were established in Asia, had resolved to prevent the threatened attack of the crusaders upon Palestine, by surprising not only the Western pilgrims, but the Christians of the East, by one of their innumerable invasions, executed with their characteristic rapidity.

Another report, approaching more near to the truth, declared that the crusaders themselves, having discovered their various causes of complaint against Alexius Comnenus, had resolved to march back their united forces to the capital, with a view of dethroning or chastising him; and the citizens were dreadfully alarmed for the consequences of the resentment of men so fierce in their habits and so strange in their manners. In short, although they did not all agree on the precise cause of danger, it was yet generally allowed that something of a dreadful kind was impending, which appeared to be in a certain degree confirmed by the motions that were taking place among the troops. The Varangians, as well as the Immortals, were gradually assembled, and placed in occupation of the strongest parts of the city, until at length the fleet of galleys, row-boats, and transports, occupied by Tancred and his party, were observed to put themselves in motion from Scutari, and attempt to gain such a height in the narrow sea as upon the turn of the tide should transport them to the port of the capital.

Alexius Comnenus was himself struck at this unexpected movement on the part of the crusaders. Yet, after some conversation with Hereward, on whom he had determined to repose his confidence, and had now gone too far to retreat, he became reassured, the more especially by the limited size of the detachment which seemed to meditate so bold a measure as an attack upon his capital. To those around him he said, with carelessness, that it was hardly to be supposed that a trumpet could blow to the charge, within hearing of the crusaders' camp, without some out of so many knights coming forth to see the cause and the issue of the conflict.

The conspirators also had their secret fears when the little armament of Tancred had been seen on the straits. Agelastes mounted a mule and went to the shore of the sea, at the place now called Galata. He met Bertha's old ferryman, whom Godfrey had set at liberty, partly in contempt, and partly that the report he was likely to make might serve to amuse the conspirators in the city. Closely examined by Agelastes, he confessed that the present detachment, so far

as he understood, was despatched at the instance of Bohemond, and was under the command of his kinsman, Tancred, whose well-known banner was floating from the headmost vessel. This gave courage to Agelastes, who, in the course of his intrigues, had opened a private communication with the wily and ever mercenary prince of Antioch. The object of the philosopher had been to obtain from Bohemond a body of his followers to co-operate in the intended conspiracy, and fortify the party of insurgents. It is true, that Bohemond had returned no answer; but the account now given by the ferryman, and the sight of Tancred the kinsman of Bohemond's banner displayed on the straits, satisfied the philosopher that his offers, his presents, and his promises had gained to his side the avaricious Italian, and that this band had been selected by Bohemond, and were coming to act in his favor.

As Agelastes turned to go off, he almost jostled a person as much muffled up, and apparently as unwilling to be known, as the philospher himself. Alexius Comnenus, however—for it was the Emperor himself—knew Agelastes, though rather from his stature and gestures than his countenance; and could not forbear whispering in his ear, as he passed, the well-known lines, to which the pretended sage's various acquisitions gave some degree of point:—

> "Grammaticus, rhetor, geometres, pictor, aliptes,
> Augur, schœnobates, medicus, magus; omnia novit.
> Græculus esuriens in cœlum, jusseris, ibit."

Agelastes first started at the unexpected sound of the Emperor's voice, yet immediately recovered presence of mind, the want of which had made him suspect himself betrayed; and without taking notice of the rank of the person to whom he spoke, he answered by a quotation which should return the alarm he had received. The speech that suggested itself was said to be that which the phantom of Cleonice dinned into the ears of the tyrant who murdered her—

> "Tu cole justitiam; teque atque alios manet ultor."*

The sentence, and the recollections which accompanied it, thrilled through the heart of the Emperor, who walked on, however, without any notice or reply.

"The vile conspirator," he said, "had his associates around him, otherwise he had not hazarded that threat. Or

*See Latin Quotations. Note 10.

it may have been worse ; Agelastes himself, on the very brink of this world, may have obtained that singular glance into futurity proper to that situation, and perhaps speaks less from his own reflection than from a strange spirit of prescience, which dictates his words. Have I then in earnest sinned so far in my imperial duty as to make it just to apply to me the warning used by the injured Cleonice to her ravisher and murderer ? Methinks I have not. Methinks that, at less expense than that of a just severity, I could ill have kept my seat in the high place where Heaven has been pleased to seat me, and where, as a ruler, I am bound to maintain my station. Methinks the sum of those who have experienced my clemency may be well numbered with that of such as have sustained the deserved punishments of their guilt. But has that vengeance, however deserved in itself, been always taken in a legal or justifiable manner ? My conscience, I doubt, will hardly answer so home a question ; and where is the man, had he the virtues of Antoninus himself, that can hold so high and responsible a place, yet sustain such an interrogation as is implied in that sort of warning which I have received from this traitor ? *Tu cole justitiam;* we all need to use justice to others. *Teque atque alios manet ultor;* we are all amenable to an avenging being. I will see the Patriarch—instantly will I see him ; and by confessing my transgressions to the church, I will, by her plenary indulgence, acquire the right of spending the last day of my reign in a consciousness of innocence, or at least of pardon—a state of mind rarely the lot of those whose lines have fallen in lofty places."

So saying, he passed to the palace of Zosimus the Patriarch, to whom he could unbosom himself with more safety because he had long considered Agelastes as a private enemy to the church, and a man attached to the ancient doctrines of heathenism. In the councils of the state they were also opposed to each other, nor did the Emperor doubt that, in communicating the secret of the conspiracy to the Patriarch, he was sure to attain a loyal and firm supporter in the defense which he proposed to himself. He therefore gave a signal by a low whistle, and a confidential officer, well mounted, approached him, who attended him in his ride, though unostentatiously, and at some distance.

In this manner, therefore, Alexius Comnenus proceeded to the palace of the Patriarch, with as much speed as was consistent with his purpose of avoiding to attract any particular notice as he passed through the street. During the

whole ride the warning of Agelastes repeatedly occurred to him, and his conscience reminded him of too many actions of his reign which could only be justified by necessity, emphatically said to be the tyrant's plea, and which were of themselves deserving the dire vengeance so long delayed.

When he came in sight of the splendid towers which adorned the front of the patriarchal palace, he turned aside from the lofty gates, repaired to a narrow court, and again giving his mule to his attendant, he stopped before a postern, whose low arch and humble architrave seemed to exclude the possibility of its leading to any place of importance. On knocking, however, a priest of an inferior order opened the door, who, with a deep reverence, received the Emperor so soon as he had made himself known, and conducted him into the interior of the palace. Demanding a secret interview with the Patriarch, Alexius was then ushered into his private library, where he was received by the aged priest with the deepest respect, which the nature of his communication soon changed into horror and astonishment.

Although Alexius was supposed by many of his own court, and particularly by some members of his own family, to be little better than a hypocrite in his religious professions, yet such severe observers were unjust in branding him with a name so odious. He was indeed aware of the great support which he received from the good opinion of the clergy, and to them he was willing to make sacrifices for the advantage of the church, or of individual prelates who manifested fidelity to the crown; but though, on the one hand, such sacrifices were rarely made by Alexius without a view to temporal policy, yet, on the other, he regarded them as recommended by his devotional feelings, and took credit to himself for various grants and actions, as dictated by sincere piety, which, in another aspect, were the fruits of temporal policy. His mode of looking on these measures was that of a person with oblique vision, who sees an object in a different manner according to the point from which he chances to contemplate it.

The Emperor placed his own errors of government before the Patriarch in his confession, giving due weight to every breach of morality as it occurred, and stripping from them the lineaments and palliative circumstances which had in his own imagination lessened their guilt. The Patriarch heard, to his astonishment, the real thread of many a court intrigue, which had borne a very different appearance till the Emperor's narrative either justified his conduct upon

the occasion or left it totally unjustifiable. Upon the whole, the balance was certainly more in favor of Alexius than the Patriarch had supposed likely in that more distant view he had taken of the intrigues of the court, when, as usual, the ministers and the courtiers endeavored to make up for the applause which they had given in counsel to the most blameable actions of the absolute monarch by elsewhere imputing to his motives greater guilt than really belonged to them. Many men who had fallen sacrifices, it was supposed, to the personal spleen or jealousy of the Emperor, appeared to have been in fact removed from life, or from liberty, because their enjoying either was inconsistent with the quiet of the state and the safety of the monarch.

Zosimus also learned, what he perhaps already suspected, that, amidst the profound silence of despotism which seemed to pervade the Grecian empire, it heaved frequently with convulsive throes, which ever and anon made obvious the existence of a volcano under the surface. Thus, while smaller delinquencies, or avowed discontent with the imperial government, seldom occurred, and were severely punished when they did, the deepest and most mortal conspiracies against the life and the authority of the Emperor were cherished by those nearest to his person ; and he was often himself aware of them, though it was not until they approached an explosion that he dared act upon his knowledge and punish the conspirators.

The whole treason of the Cæsar, with his associates, Agelastes and Achilles Tatius, was heard by the Patriarch with wonder and astonishment, and he was particularly surprised at the dexterity with which the Emperor, knowing the existence of so dangerous a conspiracy at home, had been able to parry the danger from the crusaders occurring at the same moment.

"In that respect," said the Emperor, to whom indeed the churchman hinted his surprise, "I have been singularly unfortunate. Had I been secure of the forces of my own empire, I might have taken one out of two manly and open courses with these frantic warriors of the West : I might, my reverend father, have devoted the sums paid to Bohemond and other of the more selfish among the crusaders to the honest and open support of the army of Western Christians, and safely transported them to Palestine, without exposing them to the great loss which they are likely to sustain by the opposition of the infidels ; their success would have been in fact my own, and a Latin kingdom in Palestine, de-

fended by its steel-clad warriors, would have been a safe and inexpugnable barrier of the empire against the Saracens. Or, if it was thought more expedient for the protection of the empire and the holy church, over which you are ruler, we might at once, and by open force, have defended the frontiers of our states against a host commanded by so many different and discording chiefs, advancing upon us with such equivocal intentions. If the first swarm of these locusts, under him whom they called Walter the Penniless, was thinned by the Hungarians, and totally destroyed by the Turks, as the pyramids of bones on the frontiers of the country still keep in memory, surely the united forces of the Grecian empire would have had little difficulty in scattering this second flight, though commanded by these Godfreys, Bohemonds, and Tancreds."

The Patriarch was silent, for though he disliked, or rather detested, the crusaders, as members of the Latin Church, he yet thought it highly doubtful that in feats of battle they could have been met and overcome by the Grecian forces.

"At any rate," said Alexius, rightly interpreting his silence, "if vanquished, I had fallen under my shield as a Greek emperor should, nor had I been forced into these mean measures of attacking men by stealth, and with forces disguised as infidels; while the lives of the faithful soldiers of the empire who have fallen in obscure skirmishes, had better, both for them and me, been lost bravely in their ranks, avowedly fighting for their native emperor and their native country. Now, and as the matter stands, I shall be handed down to posterity as a wily tyrant, who engaged his subjects in fatal feuds for the safety of his own obscure life. Patriarch, these crimes rest not with me, but with the rebels whose intrigues compelled me into such courses. What, reverend father, will be my fate hereafter, and in what light shall I descend to posterity, the author of so many disasters?"

"For futurity," said the Patriarch, "your Grace hath referred yourself to the holy church, which hath power to bind and to loose; your means of propitiating her are ample, and I have already indicated such as she may reasonably expect, in consequence of your repentance and forgiveness."

"They shall be granted," replied the Emperor, "in their fullest extent; nor will I injure you in doubting their effect in the next world. In this present state of existence, however, the favorable opinion of the church may do much for me during this important crisis. If we understand each

other, good Zosimus, her doctors and bishops are to thunder in my behalf, nor is it my benefit from her pardon to be deferred till the funeral monument closes upon me ?"

"Certainly not," said Zosimus, "the conditions which I have already stipulated being strictly attended to."

"And my memory in history," said Alexius, "in what manner is that to be preserved ?"

"For that," answered the Patriarch, "your Imperial Majesty must trust to the filial piety and literary talents of your accomplished daughter, Anna Comnena."

The Emperor shook his head. "This unhappy Cæsar," he said, "is like to make a quarrel between us ; for I shall scarce pardon so ungrateful a rebel as he is because my daughter clings to him with a woman's fondness. Besides, good Zosimus, it is not, I believe, the page of a historian such as my daughter that is most likely to be received without challenge by posterity. Some Procopius, some philosophical slave, starving in a garret, aspires to write the life of an emperor whom he durst not approach ; and although the principal merit of his production be that it contains particulars upon the subject which no man durst have promulgated while the prince was living, yet no man hesitates to admit such as true when he has passed from the scene."

"On that subject," said Zosimus, "I can neither afford your Imperial Majesty relief or protection. If, however, your memory is unjustly slandered upon earth, it will be a matter of indifference to your Highness, who will be then, I trust, enjoying a state of beatitude which idle slander cannot assail. The only way, indeed, to avoid it while on this side of time would be to write your Majesty's own memoirs while you are yet in the body ; so convinced am I that it is in your power to assign legitimate excuses for those actions of your life which, without your doing so, would seem most worthy of censure."

"Change we the subject," said the Emperor ; "and since the danger is imminent, let us take care for the present, and leave future ages to judge for themselves. What circumstance is it, reverend father, in your opinion, which encourages these conspirators to make so audacious an appeal to the populace and the Grecian soldiers ?"

"Certainly," answered the Patriarch, "the most irritating incident of your Highness's reign was the fate of Ursel, who, submitting, it is said, upon capitulation, for life, limb, and liberty, was starved to death by your orders in the dungeons of the Blacquernal, and whose courage, liberality, and other

popular virtues are still fondly remembered by the citizens of this metropolis, and by the soldiers of the guard called Immortal."

"And this," said the Emperor, fixing his eye upon his confessor, "your reverence esteems actually the most dangerous point of the popular tumult?"

"I cannot doubt," said the Patriarch, "that his very name, boldly pronounced and artfully repeated, will be the watchword, as has been plotted, of a horrible tumult."

"I thank Heaven!" said the Emperor, "on that particular I will be on my guard. Good night to your reverence; and believe me that all in this scroll, to which I have set my hand, shall be with the utmost fidelity accomplished. Be not, however, over-impatient in this business: such a shower of benefits falling at once upon the church would make men suspicious that the prelates and ministers proceeded rather as acting upon a bargain between the Emperor and Patriarch than as paying or receiving an atonement offered by a sinner in excuse of his crimes. This would be injurious, father, both to yourself and me."

"All regular delay," said the Patriarch, "shall be interposed at your Highness's pleasure; and we shall trust to you for recollection that the bargain, if it could be termed one, was of your own seeking, and that the benefit to the church was contingent upon the pardon and the support which she has afforded to your Majesty."

"True," said the Emperor—"most true; nor shall I forget it. Once more adieu, and forget not what I have told thee. This is a night, Zosimus, in which the Emperor must toil like a slave, if he means not to return to the humble Alexius Comnenus, and even then there were no resting-place."

So saying, he took leave of the Patriarch, who was highly gratified with the advantages he had obtained for the church, which many of his predecessors had struggled for in vain. He resolved, therefore, to support the staggering Alexius.

CHAPTER XXV

> Heaven knows its time; the bullet has its billet,
> Arrow and javelin each its destined purpose;
> The fated beasts of nature's lower strain
> Have each their separate task.
>
> *Old Play.*

AGELASTES, after crossing the Emperor in the manner we have already described, and after having taken such measures as occurred to him to ensure the success of the conspiracy, returned to the lodge of his garden, where the lady of the Count of Paris still remained, her only companion being an old woman named Vexhelia, the wife of the soldier who accompanied Bertha to the camp of the crusaders, the kind-hearted maiden having stipulated that, during her absence, her mistress was not to be left without an attendant, and that attendant connected with the Varangian Guard. He had been all day playing the part of the ambitious politician, the selfish time-server, the dark and subtle conspirator; and now it seemed, as if to exhaust the catalogue of his various parts in the human drama, he chose to exhibit himself in the character of the wily sophist, and justify, or seem to justify, the arts by which he had risen to wealth and eminence, and hoped even now to arise to royalty itself.

"Fair Countess," he said, "what occasion is there for your wearing this veil of sadness over a countenance so lovely?"

"Do you suppose me," said Brenhilda, "a stock, a stone, or a creature without the feelings of a sensitive being, that I should endure mortification, imprisonment, danger, and distress, without expressing the natural feelings of humanity? Do you imagine that to a lady like me, as free as the unreclaimed falcon, you can offer the insult of captivity, without my being sensible to the disgrace, or incensed against the authors of it? And dost thou think that I will receive consolation at thy hands—at thine—one of the most active artificers in this web of treachery in which I am so basely entangled?"

"Not entangled certainly by my means," answered

Agelastes; "clap your hands, call for what you wish, and the slave who refuses instant obedience had better been unborn. Had I not, with reference to your safety and your honor, agreed for a short time to be your keeper, that office would have been usurped by the Cæsar, whose object you know, and may partly guess the modes by which it would be pursued. Why then dost thou childishly weep at being held for a short space in an honorable restraint, which the renowned arms of your husband will probably put an end to long ere to-morrow at noon?"

"Canst thou not comprehend," said the Countess, "thou man of many words, but of few honorable thoughts, that a heart like mine, which has been trained in the feelings of reliance upon my own worth and valor, must be necessarily affected with shame at being obliged to accept, even from the sword of a husband, that safety which I would gladly have owed only to my own?"

"Thou art misled, Countess," answered the philosopher, "by thy pride, a failing predominant in woman. Thinkest thou there has been no offensive assumption in laying aside the character of a mother and a wife, and adopting that of one of those brain-sick female fools who, like the bravoes of the other sex, sacrifice everything that is honorable or useful to a frantic and insane affectation of courage? Believe me, fair lady, that the true system of virtue consists in filling thine own place gracefully in society, breeding up thy children, and delighting those of the other sex; and anything beyond this may well render thee hateful or terrible, but can add nothing to thy amiable qualities."

"Thou pretendest," said the Countess, "to be a philosopher; methinks thou shouldst know that the fame which hangs its chaplet on the tomb of a brave hero or heroine is worth all the petty engagements in which ordinary persons spend the current of their time. One hour of life, crowded to the full with glorious action, and filled with noble risks, is worth whole years of those mean observances of paltry decorum in which men steal through existence, like sluggish waters through a marsh, without either honor or observation."

"Daughter," said Agelastes, approaching nearer to the lady, "it is with pain, I see you bewildered in errors which a little calm reflection might remove. We may flatter ourselves, and human vanity usually does so, that beings infinitely more powerful than those belonging to mere humanity are employed daily in measuring out the good and evil of

this world, the termination of combats, or the fate of empires, according to their own ideas of what is right or wrong, or, more properly, according to what we ourselves conceive to be such. The Greek heathens, renowned for their wisdom and glorious for their actions, explained to men of ordinary minds the supposed existence of Jupiter and his pantheon, where various deities presided over various virtues and vices, and regulated the temporal fortune and future happiness of such as practised them. The more learned and wise of the ancients rejected such the vulgar interpretation, and wisely, although affecting a difference to the public faith, denied before their disciples in private the gross fallacies of Tartarus and Olympus, the vain doctrines concerning the gods themselves, and the extravagant expectations which the vulgar entertained of an immortality supposed to be possessed by creatures who were in every respect mortal, both in the conformation of their bodies and in the internal belief of their souls. Of these wise and good men some granted the existence of the supposed deities, but denied that they cared about the actions of mankind any more than those of the inferior animals. A merry, jovial, careless life, such as the followers of Epicurus would choose for themselves, was what they assigned for those gods whose being they admitted. Others, more bold or more consistent, entirely denied the existence of deities who apparently had no proper object or purpose, and believed that such of them whose being and attributes were proved to us by no supernatural appearances had in reality no existence whatever."

"Stop, wretch!" said the Countess, "and know that thou speakest not to one of those blinded heathens of whose abominable doctrines you are detailing the result. Know that, if an erring, I am nevertheless a sincere, daughter of the church, and this cross displayed on my shoulder is a sufficient emblem of the vows I have undertaken in its cause. Be therefore wary, as thou art wily; for, believe me, if thou scoffest or utterest reproach against my holy religion, what I am unable to answer in language I will reply to, without hesitation, with the point of my dagger."

"To that argument," said Agelastes, drawing back from the neighborhood of Brenhilda, "believe me, fair lady, I am very unwilling to urge your gentleness. But, although I shall not venture to say anything of those superior and benevolent powers to whom you ascribe the management of the world, you will surely not take offense at my noticing

those base superstitions which have been adopted in explanation of what is called by the Magi the Evil Principle. Was there ever received into a human creed a being so mean—almost so ridiculous—as the Christian Satan? A goatish figure and limbs, with grotesque features, formed to express the most execrable passions; a degree of power scarce inferior to that of the Deity; and a talent at the same time scarce equal to that of the stupidest of the lowest order! What is he, this being, who is at least the second arbiter of the human race, save an immortal spirit, with the petty spleen and spite of a vindictive old man or old woman?"

Agelastes made a singular pause in this part of his discourse. A mirror of considerable size hung in the apartment, so that the philosopher could see in its reflection the figure of Brenhilda, and remark the change of her countenance, though she had averted her face from him in hatred of the doctrines which he promulgated. On this glass the philosopher had his eyes naturally fixed, and he was confounded at perceiving a figure glide from behind the shadow of a curtain, and glare at him with the supposed mien and expression of the Satan of monkish mythology, or a satyr of the heathen age.

"Man!" said Brenhilda, whose attention was attracted by this extraordinary apparition, as it seemed, of the Fiend, "have thy wicked words, and still more wicked thoughts, brought the Devil amongst us? If so, dismiss him instantly, else, by Our Lady of the Broken Lances! thou shalt know better than at present what is the temper of a Frankish maiden when in presence of the Fiend himself, and those who pretend skill to raise him. I wish not to enter into a contest unless compelled; but if I am obliged to join battle with an enemy so horrible, believe me, no one shall say that Brenhilda feared him."

Agelastes, after looking with surprise and horror at the figure as reflected in the glass, turned back his head to examine the substance, of which the reflection was so strange. The object, however, had disappeared behind the curtain, under which it probably lay hid, and it was after a minute or two that the half-gibing, half-scowling countenance showed itself again in the same position in the mirror.

"By the gods——!" said Agelastes.

"In whom but now," said the Countess, "you professed unbelief."

"By the gods!" repeated Agelastes, in part recovering himself, "it is Sylvan, that singular mockery of humanity,

who was said to have been brought from Taprobana. I warrant he also believes in his jolly god Pan, or the veteran Sylvanus. He is to the uninitiated a creature whose appearance is full of terrors, but he shrinks before the philosopher like ignorance before knowledge." So saying, he with one hand pulled down the curtain, under which the animal had nestled itself when it entered from the garden-window of the pavilion, and with the other, in which he had a staff uplifted, threatened to chastise the creature, with the words—"How now, Sylvanus! what insolence is this? To your place!"

As, in uttering these words, he struck the animal, the blow unluckily lighted upon his wounded hand, and recalled its bitter smart. The wild temper of the creature returned, unsubdued for the moment by any awe of man; uttering a fierce, and at the same time stifled, cry, it flew on the philosopher, and clasped its strong and sinewy arms about his throat with the utmost fury. The old man twisted and struggled to deliver himself from the creature's grasp, but in vain. Sylvan kept hold of his prize, compressed his sinewy arms, and abode by his purpose of not quitting his hold of the philosopher's throat until he had breathed his last. Two more bitter yells, accompanied each with a desperate contortion of the countenance and squeeze of the hands, concluded, in less than five minutes, the dreadful strife.

Agelastes lay dead upon the ground, and his assassin Sylvan, springing from the body as if terrified and alarmed at what he had done, made his escape by the window. The Countess stood in astonishment, not knowing exactly whether she had witnessed a supernatural display of the judgment of Heaven or an instance of its vengeance by mere mortal means. Her new attendant Vexhelia was no less astonished, though her acquaintance with the animal was considerably more intimate.

"Lady," she said, "that gigantic creature is an animal of great strength, resembling mankind in form, but huge in its size, and, encouraged by its immense power, sometimes malevolent in its intercourse with mortals. I have heard the Varangians often talk of it as belonging to the imperial museum. It is fitting we remove the body of this unhappy man, and hide it in a plot of shrubbery in the garden. It is not likely that he will be missed to-night, and to-morrow there will be other matter astir, which will probably prevent much inquiry about him." The Countess Brenhilda

assented, for she was not one of those timorous females to whom the countenances of the dead are objects of terror.

Trusting to the parole which she had given, Agelastes had permitted the Countess and her attendant the freedom of his gardens, of that part at least adjacent to the pavilion. They therefore were in little risk of interruption as they bore forth the dead body between them, and without much trouble disposed of it in the thickest part of one of the bosquets with which the garden was studded.

As they returned to their place of abode or confinement, the Countess, half speaking to herself, half addressing Vexhelia, said—"I am sorry for this; not that the infamous wretch did not deserve the full punishment of Heaven coming upon him in the very moment of blasphemy and infidelity, but because the courage and truth of the unfortunate Brenhilda may be brought into suspicion, as his slaughter took place when he was alone with her and her attendant, and as no one was witness of the singular manner in which the old blasphemer met his end. Thou knowest," she added, addressing herself to Heaven—"thou! blessed Lady of the Broken Lances, the protectress both of Brenhilda and her husband, well knowest that, whatever faults may be mine, I am free from the slightest suspicion of treachery; and into thy hands I put my cause, with a perfect reliance upon thy wisdom and bounty to bear evidence in my favor." So saying, they returned to the lodge unseen, and with pious and submissive prayers the Countess closed that eventful evening.

CHAPTER XXVI

Will you hear of a Spanish lady,
How she wooed an Englishman?
Garments gay, as rich as may be,
Deck'd with jewels she had on.
Of a comely countenance and grace was she,
And by birth and parentage of high degree.

Old Ballad.

We left Alexius Comnenus after he had unloaded his conscience in the ears of the Patriarch, and received from him a faithful assurance of the pardon and patronage of the national church. He took leave of the dignitary with some exulting exclamations, so unexplicitly expressed, however, that it was by no means easy to conceive the meaning of what he said. His first inquiry, when he reached the Blacquernal, being for his daughter, he was directed to the room encrusted with beautifully carved marble, from which she herself, and many of her race, derived the proud appellation of *porphyrogenita*, or born in the purple. Her countenance was clouded with anxiety, which, at the sight of her father, broke out into open and uncontrollable grief.

"Daughter," said the Emperor, with a harshness little common to his manner, and a seriousness which he sternly maintained, instead of sympathizing with his daughter's affliction, "as you would prevent the silly fool with whom you are connected from displaying himself to the public both as an ungrateful monster and a traitor, you will not fail to exhort him, by due submission, to make his petition for pardon, accompanied with a full confession of his crimes, or, by my scepter and my crown, he shall die the death! Nor will I pardon any who rushes upon his doom in an open tone of defiance, under such a standard of rebellion as my ungrateful son-in-law has hoisted."

"What can you require of me, father?" said the Princess. "Can you expect that I am to dip my own hands in the blood of this unfortunate man; or wilt thou seek a revenge yet more bloody than that which was exacted by the deities of antiquity upon those criminals who offended against their divine power?"

"Think not so, my daughter," said the Emperor; "but rather believe that thou hast the last opportunity afforded by my filial affection of rescuing, perhaps from death, that silly fool thy husband, who has so richly deserved it."

"My father," said the Princess, "God knows it is not at your risk that I would wish to purchase the life of Nicephorus; but he has been the father of my children, though they are now no more, and women cannot forget that such a tie has existed, even though it has been broken by fate. Permit me only to hope that the unfortunate culprit shall have an opportunity of retrieving his errors; nor shall it, believe me, be my fault if he resumes those practices, treasonable at once and unnatural, by which his life is at present endangered."

"Follow me, then, daughter," said the Emperor, "and know, that to thee alone I am about to entrust a secret, upon which the safety of my life and crown, as well as the pardon of my son-in-law's life, will be found eventually to depend."

He then assumed in haste the garment of a slave of the seraglio, and commanded his daughter to arrange her dress in a more succinct form, and to take in her hand a lighted lamp.

"Whither are we going, my father?" said Anna Comnena.

"It matters not," replied her father, "since my destiny calls me, and since thine ordains thee to be my torch-bearer. Believe it, and record it, if thou darest, in thy book, that Alexius Comnenus does not, without alarm, descend into those awful dungeons which his predecessors built for men, even when his intentions are innocent and free from harm. Be silent, and should we meet any inhabitant of those inferior regions, speak not a word, nor make any observation upon his appearance."

Passing through the intricate apartments of the palace, they now came to that large hall through which Hereward had passed on the first night of his introduction to the place of Anna's recitation, called the Temple of the Muses. It was constructed, as we have said, of black marble, dimly illuminated. At the upper end of the apartment was a small altar, on which was laid some incense, while over the smoke were suspended, as if projecting from the wall, two imitations of human hands and arms, which were but imperfectly seen.

At the bottom of this hall, a small iron door led to a narrow and winding staircase, resembling a draw-well in

shape and size, the steps of which were excessively steep, and which the Emperor, after a solemn gesture to his daughter commanding her attendance, began to descend with the imperfect light, and by the narrow and difficult steps by which those who visited the under regions of the Blacquernal seemed to bid adieu to the light of day. Door after door they passed in their descent, leading, it was probable, to different ranges of dungeons, from which was obscurely heard the stifled voice of groans and sighs, such as attracted Hereward's attention on a former occasion. The Emperor took no notice of these signs of human misery, and three stories, or ranges of dungeons, had been already passed, ere the father and daughter arrived at the lowest story of the building, the base of which was the solid rock, roughly carved, upon which were erected the side-walls and arches of solid but unpolished marble.

"Here," said Alexius Comnenus, "all hope, all expectation takes farewell, at the turn of a hinge or the grating of a lock. Yet shall not this be always the case; the dead shall revive and resume their right, and the disinherited of these regions shall again prefer their claim to inhabit the upper world. If I cannot entreat Heaven to my assistance, be assured, my daughter, that rather than be the poor animal which I have stooped to be thought, and even to be painted in thy history, I would sooner brave every danger of the multitude which now erect themselves betwixt me and safety. Nothing is resolved save that I will live and die an emperor; and thou, Anna, be assured that, if there is power in the beauty or in the talents of which so much has been boasted, that power shall be this evening exercised to the advantage of thy parent, from whom it is derived."

"What is it that you mean, imperial father? Holy Virgin! is this the promise you made me to save the life of the unfortunate Nicephorus?"

"And so I will," said the Emperor; "and I am now about that action of benevolence. But think not I will once more warm in my bosom the household snake which had so nearly stung me to death. No, daughter, I have provided for thee a fitting husband, in one who is able to maintain and defend the rights of the Emperor thy father; and beware how thou opposest an obstacle to what is my pleasure! for behold these walls of marble, though unpolished, and recollect it is as possible to die within the marble as to be born there."

The Princess Anna Comnena was frightened at seeing her

father in a state of mind entirely different from any which she had before witnessed. "O, Heaven! that my mother were here!" she ejaculated; in the terror of something she hardly knew what.

"Anna," said the Emperor, "your fears and your screams are alike in vain. I am one of those who, on ordinary occasions, hardly nourish a wish of my own, and account myself obliged to those who, like my wife and daughter, take care to save me all the trouble of free judgment. But when the vessel is among the breakers, and the master is called to the helm, believe that no meaner hand shall be permitted to interfere with him, nor will the wife and daughter whom he indulged in prosperity be allowed to thwart his will while he can yet call it his own. Thou couldst scarcely fail to understand that I was almost prepared to have given thee as a mark of my sincerity to yonder obscure Varangian, without asking question of either birth or blood. Thou mayst hear when I next promise thee to a three years' inhabitant of these vaults, who shall be Cæsar in Briennius's stead, if I can move him to accept a princess for his bride, and an imperial crown for his inheritance, in place of a starving dungeon."

"I tremble at your words, father," said Anna Comnena. "How canst thou trust a man who has felt thy cruelty? How canst thou dream that aught can ever in sincerity reconcile thee to one whom thou hast deprived of his eyesight?"

"Care not for that," said Alexius; "he becomes mine, or he shall never know what it is to be again his own. And thou, girl, mayest rest assured that, if I will it, thou art next day the bride of my present captive, or thou retirest to the most severe nunnery, never again to mix with society. Be silent, therefore, and await thy doom, as it shall come, and hope not that thy utmost endeavors can avert the current of thy destiny."

As he concluded this singular dialogue, in which he had assumed a tone to which his daughter was a stranger, and before which she trembled, he passed on through more than one strictly fastened door, while his daughter, with a faltering step, illuminated him on the obscure road. At length he found admittance by another passage into the cell in which Ursel was confined, and found him reclining in hopeless misery, all those expectations having faded from his heart which the Count of Paris had by his indomitable gallantry for a time excited. He turned his sightless eyes

towards the place where he heard the moving of bolts and the approach of steps.

"A new feature," he said, "in my imprisonment—a man comes with a heavy and determined step, and a woman or a child with one that scarcely presses the floor! Is it my death that you bring? Believe me, that I have lived long enough in these dungeons to bid my doom welcome."

"It is not thy death, noble Ursel," said the Emperor, in a voice somewhat disguised. "Life, liberty, whatever the world has to give, is placed by the Emperor Alexius at the feet of his noble enemy, and he trusts that many years of happiness and power, together with the command of a large share of the empire, will soon obliterate the recollection of the dungeons of the Blacquernal."

'It cannot be," said Ursel, with a sigh. "He upon whose eyes the sun has set even at middle day can have nothing left to hope from the most advantageous change of circumstances."

"You are not entirely assured of that," said the Emperor; "allow us to convince you that what is intended towards you is truly favorable and liberal, and I hope you will be rewarded by finding that there is more possibility of amendment in your case than your first apprehensions are willing to receive. Make an effort, and try whether your eyes are not sensible of the light of the lamp."

"Do with me," said Ursel, "according to your pleasure; I have neither strength to remonstrate nor the force of mind equal to make me set your cruelty at defiance. Of something like light I am sensible; but whether it is reality or illusion I cannot determine. If you are come to deliver me from this living sepulcher, I pray God to requite you; and if, under such deceitful pretense, you mean to take my life, I can only commend my soul to Heaven, and the vengeance due to my death to him who can behold the darkest places in which injustice can shroud itself."

So saying, and the revulsion of his spirits rendering him unable to give almost any other sign of existence, Ursel sunk back upon his seat of captivity, and spoke not another word during the time that Alexius disembarrassed him of those chains which had so long hung about him that they almost seemed to make a part of his person.

"This is an affair in which thy aid can scarce be sufficient, Anna," said the Emperor: "it would have been well if you and I could have borne him into the open air by our joint strength, for there is little wisdom in showing the secrets of

this prison-house to those to whom they are not yet known; nevertheless, go, my child, and at a short distance from the head of the staircase which we descended thou wilt find Edward, the bold and trusty Varangian, who, on your communicating to him my orders, will come hither and render his assistance; and see that you send also the experienced leach, Douban."

Terrified, half-stifled, and half-struck with horror, the lady yet felt a degree of relief from the somewhat milder tone in which her father addressed her. With tottering steps, yet in some measure encouraged by the tenor of her instructions, she ascended the staircase, which yawned upon these infernal dungeons. As she approached the top, a large and strong figure threw its broad shadow between the lamp and the opening of the hall. Frightened nearly to death at the thoughts of becoming the wife of a squalid wretch like Ursel, a moment of weakness seized upon the Princess's mind, and, when she considered the melancholy option which her father had placed before her, she could not but think that the handsome and gallant Varangian, who had already rescued the royal family from such imminent danger, was a fitter person with whom to unite herself, if she must needs make a second choice, than the singular and disgusting being whom her father's policy had raked from the bottom of the Blacquernal dungeons.

I will not say of poor Anna Comnena, who was a timid but not an unfeeling woman, that she would have embraced such a proposal, had not the life of her present husband, Nicephorus Briennius, been in extreme danger; and it was obviously the determination of the Emperor that, if he spared him, it should be on the sole condition of unloosing his daughter's hand, and binding her to some one of better faith, and possessed of a greater desire to prove an affectionate son-in-law. Neither did the plan of adopting the Varangian as a second husband enter decidedly into the mind of the Princess. The present was a moment of danger, in which her rescue to be successful must be sudden, and perhaps, if once achieved, the lady might have had an opportunity of freeing herself both from Ursel and the Varangian, without disjoining either of them from her father's assistance, or of herself losing it. At any rate, the surest means of safety were to secure, if possible, the young soldier, whose features and appearance were of a kind which rendered the task no way disagreeable to a beautiful woman. The schemes ofconquest are so natural to the fair sex, and the whole idea passed so quickly

through Anna Comnena's mind, that, having first entered while the soldier's shadow was interposed between her and the lamp, it had fully occupied her quick imagination, when, with deep reverence and great surprise at her sudden appearance on the ladder of Acheron, the Varangian advancing, knelt down and lent his arm to the assistance of the fair lady, in order to help her out of the dreary staircase.

"Dearest Hereward," said the lady, with a degree of intimacy which seemed unusual, "how much do I rejoice, in this dreadful night, to have fallen under your protection! I have been in places which the spirit of Hell appears to have contrived for the human race." The alarm of the Princess, the familiarity of a beautiful woman, who, while in mortal fear, seeks refuge, like a frightened dove, in the bosom of the strong and the brave, must be the excuse of Anna Comnena for the tender epithet with which she greeted Hereward; nor, if he had chosen to answer in the same tone, which, faithful as he was, might have proved the case if the meeting had chanced before he saw Bertha, would the daughter of Alexius have been, to say the truth, irreconcilably offended. Exhausted as she was, she suffered herself to repose upon the broad breast and shoulder of the Anglo-Saxon; nor did she make an attempt to recover herself, although the decorum of her sex and station seemed to recommend such an exertion. Hereward was obliged himself to ask her, with the unimpassioned and reverential demeanor of a private soldier to a princess, whether he ought to summon her female attendants, to which she faintly uttered a negative. "No—no," said she, "I have a duty to execute for my father, and I must not summon eye-witnesses; he knows me to be in safety, Hereward, since he knows I am with thee; and if I am a burden to you in my present state of weakness, I shall soon recover, if you will set me down upon the marble steps."

"Heaven forbid, lady," said Hereward, "that I were thus neglectful of your Highness's gracious health! I see your two young ladies, Astarte and Violante, are in quest of you. Permit me to summon them hither, and I will keep watch upon you if you are unable to retire to your chamber, where, methinks, the present disorder of your nerves will be most properly treated."

"Do as thou wilt, barbarian," said the Princess, rallying herself, with a certain degree of pique, arising perhaps from her not thinking more *dramatis personæ* were appropriate

to the scene than the two who were already upon the stage. Then, as if for the first time appearing to recollect the message with which she had been commissioned, she exhorted the Varangian to repair instantly to her father.

On such occasions, the slightest circumstances have their effect on the actors. The Anglo-Saxon was sensible that the Princess was somewhat offended, though whether she was so on account of her being actually in Hereward's arms, or whether the cause of her anger was the being nearly discovered there by the two young maidens, the sentinel did not presume to guess, but departed for the gloomy vaults to join Alexius, with the never-failing double-edged ax, the bane of many a Turk, glittering upon his shoulder.

Astarte and her companion had been despatched by the Empress Irene in search of Anna Comnena, through those apartments of the palace which she was wont to inhabit. The daughter of Alexius could nowhere be found, although the business on which they were seeking her was described by the Empress as of the most pressing nature. Nothing, however, in a palace passes altogether unespied, so that the Empress's messengers at length received information that their mistress and the Emperor had been seen to descend that gloomy access to the dungeons which, by allusion to the classical infernal regions, was termed the Pit of Acheron. They came thither, accordingly, and we have related the consequences. Hereward thought it necessary to say that her Imperial Highness had swooned upon being suddenly brought into the upper air. The Princess, on the other part, briskly shook off her juvenile attendants, and declared herself ready to proceed to the chamber of her mother. The obeisance which she made Hereward at parting had something in it of haughtiness, yet evidently qualified by a look of friendship and regard. As she passed an apartment in which some of the royal slaves were in waiting, she addressed to one of them, an old, respectable man, of medical skill, a private and hurried order, desiring him to go to the assistance of her father, whom he would find at the bottom of the staircase called the Pit of Acheron, and to take his scimitar along with him. To hear, as usual, was to obey, and Douban, for that was his name, only replied by that significant sign which indicates immediate acquiescence. In the mean time, Anna Comnena herself hastened onward to her mother's apartments, in which she found the Empress alone.

"Go hence, maidens," said Irene, "and do not let any

one have access to these apartments, even if the Emperor himself should command it. Shut the door," she said. "Anna Comnena: and if the jealousy of the stronger sex do not allow us the masculine privilege of bolts and bars to secure the insides of our apartments, let us avail ourselves, as quickly as may be, of such opportunities as are permitted us; and remember, Princess, that however implicit your duty to your father, it is yet more so to me, who am of the same sex with thyself, and may truly call thee, even according to the letter, blood of my blood and bone of my bone. Be assured thy father knows not at this moment the feelings of a woman. Neither he nor any man alive can justly conceive the pangs of the heart which beats under a woman's robe. These men, Anna, would tear asunder without scruple the tenderest ties of affection, the whole structure of domestic felicity, in which lie a woman's cares, her joy, her pain, her love, and her despair. Trust, therefore, to me, my daughter, and believe me, I will at once save thy father's crown and thy happiness. The conduct of thy husband has been wrong—most cruelly wrong; but, Anna, he is a man, and in calling him such I lay to his charge, as natural frailties, thoughtless treachery, wanton infidelity, every species of folly and inconsistency to which his race is subject. You ought not, therefore, to think of his faults, unless it be to forgive them."

"Madam," said Anna Comnena, "forgive me if I remind you that you recommend to a princess born in the purple itself a line of conduct which would hardly become the female who carries the pitcher for the needful supply of water to the village well. All who are around me have been taught to pay me the obeisance due to my birth, and while this Nicephorus Briennius crept on his knees to your daughter's hand, which you extended towards him, he was rather receiving the yoke of a mistress than accepting a household alliance with a wife. He has incurred his doom, without a touch even of that temptation which may be plead by lesser culprits in his condition; and if it is the will of my father that he should die, or suffer banishment or imprisonment, for the crime he has committed, it is not the business of Anna Comnena to interfere, she being the most injured among the imperial family, who have in so many and such gross respects the right to complain of his falsehood."

"Daughter," replied the Empress, "so far I agree with you, that the treason of Nicephorus towards your father and myself has been in a great degree unpardonable; nor do I

easily see on what footing, save that of generosity, his life could be saved. But still you are yourself in different circumstances from me, and may, as an affectionate and fond wife, compare the intimacies of your former habits with the bloody change which is so soon to be the consequence and the conclusion of his crimes. He is possessed of that person and of those features which women most readily recall to their memory, whether alive or dead. Think what it will cost you to recollect that the rugged executioner received his last salute, that the shapely neck had no better repose than the rough block, that the tongue the sound of which you used to prefer to the choicest instruments of music is silent in the dust!"

Anna, who was not insensible to the personal graces of her husband, was much affected by this forcible appeal. "Why distress me thus, mother?" she replied, in a weeping accent. "Did I not feel as acutely as you would have me to do, this moment, however awful, would be easily borne. I had but to think of him as he is, to contrast his personal qualities with those of the mind, by which they are more than overbalanced, and resign myself to his deserved fate with unresisting submission to my father's will."

"And that," said the Empress, "would be to bind thee, by his sole fiat, to some obscure wretch, whose habits of plotting and intriguing had, by some miserable chance, given him the opportunity of becoming of importance to the Emperor, and who is therefore to be rewarded by the hand of Anna Comnena."

"Do not think so meanly of me, madam," said the Princess. "I know, as well as ever Grecian maiden did, how I should free myself from dishonor; and, you may trust me, you shall never blush for your daughter."

"Tell me not that," said the Empress, "since I shall blush alike for the relentless cruelty which gives up a once beloved husband to an ignominious death, and for the passion, for which I want a name, which would replace him by an obscure barbarian from the extremity of Thule, or some wretch escaped from the Blacquernal dungeons."

The Princess was astonished to perceive that her mother was acquainted with the purposes, even the most private, which her father had formed for his governance during this emergency. She was ignorant that Alexius and his royal consort, in other respects living together with a decency ever exemplary in people of their rank, had sometimes, on interesting occasions, family debates, in which the hus-

band, provoked by the seeming unbelief of his partner, was tempted to let her guess more of his real purposes than he would have coolly imparted of his own calm choice.

The Princess was affected at the anticipation of the death of her husband, nor could this have been reasonably supposed to be otherwise; but she was still more hurt and affronted by her mother taking it for granted that she designed upon the instant to replace the Cæsar by an uncertain, and at all events an unworthy, successor. Whatever considerations had operated to make Hereward her choice, their effect was lost when the match was placed in this odious and degrading point of view; besides which is to be remembered, that women almost instinctively deny their first thoughts in favor of a suitor, and seldom willingly reveal them, unless time and circumstance concur to favor them. She called Heaven, therefore, passionately to witness, while she repelled the charge.

"Bear witness," she said, "Our Lady, Queen of Heaven! bear witness, saints and martyrs all, ye blessed ones, who are, more than ourselves, the guardians of our mental purity, that I know no passion which I dare not avow, and that, if Nicephorus's life depended on my entreaty to God and men, all his injurious acts towards me disregarded and despised, it should be as long as Heaven gave to those servants whom it snatched from the earth without suffering the pangs of mortality."

"You have sworn boldly," said the Empress. "See, Anna Comnena, that you keep your word, for believe me it will be tried."

"What will be tried, mother?" said the Princess; "or what have I to do to pronounce the doom of the Cæsar, who is not subject to my power?"

"I will show you," said the Empress, gravely; and, leading her towards a sort of wardrobe, which formed a closet in the wall, she withdrew a curtain which hung before it, and placed before her her unfortunate husband, Nicephorus Briennius, half-attired, with his sword drawn in his hand. Looking upon him as an enemy, and conscious of some schemes with respect to him which had passed through her mind in the course of these troubles, the Princess screamed faintly, upon perceiving him so near her with a weapon in his hand.

"Be more composed," said the Empress, "or this wretched man, if discovered, falls no less a victim to thy idle fears than to thy baneful revenge."

Nicephorus at this speech seemed to have adopted his cue, for, dropping the point of his sword, and falling on his knees before the Princess, he clasped his hands to entreat for mercy.

"What hast thou to ask from me?" said his wife, naturally assured, by her husband's prostration, that the stronger force was upon her own side—"what hast thou to ask from me, that outraged gratitude, betrayed affection, the most solemn vows violated, and the fondest ties of nature torn asunder like the spider's broken web, will permit thee to put in words for very shame?"

"Do not suppose, Anna," replied the suppliant, "that I am at this eventful period of my life to play the hypocrite, for the purpose of saving the wretched remnant of a dishonored existence. I am but desirous to part in charity with thee, to make my peace with Heaven, and to nourish the last hope of making my way, though burdened with many crimes, to those regions in which alone I can find thy beauty, thy talents, equaled at least, if not excelled."

"You hear him, daughter?" said Irene. "His boon is for forgiveness alone; thy condition is the more godlike, since thou mayst unite the safety of his life with the pardon of his offenses."

"Thou art deceived, mother," answered Anna. "It is not mine to pardon his guilt, far less to remit his punishment. You have taught me to think of myself as future ages shall know me; what will they say of me, those future ages, when I am described as the unfeeling daughter who pardoned the intended assassin of her father because she saw in him her own unfaithful husband?"

"See there," said the Cæsar, "is not that, most serene Empress, the very point of despair? and have I not in vain offered my life-blood to wipe out the stain of parricide and ingratitude? Have I not also vindicated myself from the most unpardonable part of the accusation, which charged me with attempting the murder of the godlike emperor? Have I not sworn by all that is sacred to man, that my purpose went no farther than to sequestrate Alexius for a little time from the fatigues of empire, and place him where he should quietly enjoy ease and tranquillity; while, at the same time, his empire should be as implicitly regulated by himself, his sacred pleasure being transmitted through me, as in any respect, or at any period, it had ever been?"

"Erring man!" said the Princess, "hast thou approached so near to the footstool of Alexius Comnenus, and durst

thou form so false an estimate of him as to conceive it possible that he would consent to be a mere puppet by whose intervention you might have brought his empire to submission? Know that the blood of Comnenus is not so poor: my father would have resisted the treason in arms, and by the death of thy benefactor only couldst thou have gratified the suggestions of thy criminal ambition."

"Be such your belief," said the Cæsar; "I have said enough for a life which is not and ought not to be dear to me. Call your guards and let them take the life of the unfortunate Briennius, since it has become hateful to his once beloved Anna Comnena. Be not afraid that any resistance of mine shall render the scene of my apprehension dubious or fatal. Nicephorus Briennius is Cæsar no longer, and he thus throws at the feet of his princess and spouse the only poor means which he has of resisting the just doom which is therefore at her pleasure to pass."

He cast his sword before the feet of the Princess, while Irene exclaimed, weeping, or seeming to weep, bitterly—"I have indeed read of such scenes; but could I ever have thought that my own daughter would have been the principal actress in one of them; could I ever have thought that her mind, admired by every one as a palace for the occupation of Apollo and the Muses, should not have had room enough for the humbler but more amiable virtue of feminine charity and compassion, which builds itself a nest in the bosom of the lowest village girl? Do thy gifts, accomplishments, and talents spread hardness as well as polish over thy heart? If so, a hundred times better renounce them all, and retain in their stead those gentle and domestic virtues which are the first honors of the female heart. A woman who is pitiless is a worse monster than one who is unsexed by any other passion."

"What would you have me do?" said Anna. "You, mother, ought to know better than I that the life of my father is hardly consistent with the existence of this bold and cruel man. O, I am sure he still meditates his purpose of conspiracy! He that could deceive a woman in the manner he has done me will not relinquish a plan which is founded upon the death of his benefactor."

"You do me injustice, Anna," said Briennius, starting up and imprinting a kiss upon her lips ere she was aware. "By this caress, the last that will pass between us, I swear that, if in my life I have yielded to folly, I have, notwithstanding, never been guilty of a treason of the heart towards a woman

as superior to the rest of the female world in talents and accomplishments as in personal beauty."

The Princess, much softened, shook her head as she replied —"Ah, Nicephorus, such were once your words; such, perhaps were then your thoughts; but who or what shall now warrant to me the veracity of either?"

"Those very accomplishments and that very beauty itself," replied Nicephorus.

"And if more is wanting," said Irene, "thy mother will enter her security for him. Deem her not an insufficient pledge in this affair: she is thy mother, and the wife of Alexius Comnenus, interested beyond all human beings in the growth and increase of the power and dignity of her husband and her child; and one who sees on this occasion an opportunity for exercising generosity, for soldering up the breaches of the imperial house, and reconstructing the form of government upon a basis which, if there be faith and gratitude in man, shall never be again exposed to hazard,"

"To the reality of that faith and gratitude then," said the Princess," "we must trust implicitly, as it is your will, mother; although even my own knowledge of the subject, both through study and experience of the world, has called me to observe the rashness of such confidence. But although we two may forgive Nicephorus's errors, the Emperor is still the person to whom the final reference must be had, both as to pardon and favor."

"Fear not Alexius," answered her mother; "he will speak determinedly and decidedly, but, if he acts not in the very moment of forming the resolution, it is no more to be relied on than an icicle in time of thaw. Do thou apprise me, if thou canst, what the Emperor is at present doing, and take my word I will find means to bring him round to our opinion."

"Must I then betray secrets which my father has entrusted to me?" said the Princess, "and to one who has so lately held the character of his avowed enemy?"

"Call it not betray," said Irene, "since it is written, thou shalt betray no one, least of all thy father, and the father of the empire. Yet again it is written by the holy Luke, that men shall be betrayed, both by parents and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends, and therefore surely also by daughters; by which I only mean thou shalt discover to us thy father's secrets, so far as may enable us to save the life of thy husband. The necessity of the case excuses whatever may be otherwise considered as irregular."

"Be it so then, mother. Having yielded my consent, perhaps too easily, to snatch this malefactor from my father's justice, I am sensible I must secure his safety by such means as are in my power. I left my father at the bottom of those stairs called the Pit of Archeron, in the cell of a blind man, to whom he gave the name of Ursel."

"Holy Mary!" exclaimed the Empress, "thou hast named a name which has been long unspoken in the open air."

"Has the Emperor's sense of his danger from the living," said the Cæsar, "induced him to invoke the dead? for Ursel has been no living man for the space of three years."

"It matters not," said Anna Comnena; "I tell you true. My father even now held conference with a miserable-looking prisoner whom he so named."

"It is a danger the more," said the Cæsar: "he cannot have forgotten the zeal with which I embraced the cause of the present emperor against his own; and so soon as he is at liberty, he will study to avenge it. For this we must endeavor to make some provision, though it increases our difficulties. Sit down then, my gentle, my beneficent mother; and thou, my wife, who hast preferred thy love for an unworthy husband to the suggestions of jealous passion and of headlong revenge, sit down, and let us see in what manner it may be in our power, consistently with your duty to the Emperor, to bring our broken vessel securely into port."

He employed much natural grace of manner in handing the mother and daughter to their seats; and, taking his place confidentially between them, all were soon engaged in concerting what measures should be taken for the morrow, not forgetting such as should at once have the effect of preserving the Cæsar's life, and at the same time of securing the Grecian empire against the conspiracy of which he had been the chief instigator. Briennius ventured to hint that perhaps the best way would be to suffer the conspiracy to proceed as originally intended, pledging his own faith that the rights of Alexius should be held inviolate during the struggle; but his influence over the Empress and her daughter did not extend to obtaining so great a trust. They plainly protested against permitting him to leave the palace, or taking the least share in the confusion which tomorrow was certain to witness.

"You forget, noble ladies," said the Cæsar, "that my honor is concerned in meeting the Count of Paris."

"Pshaw! tell me not of your honor, Briennius," said

Anna Comnena; "do I not well know that, although the honor of the Western knights be a species of Moloch, a flesh-devouring, blood-quaffing demon, yet that which is the god of idolatry to the Eastern warriors, though equally loud and noisy in the hall, is far less implacable in the field? Believe not that I have forgiven great injuries and insults, in order to take such false coin as *honor* in payment. Your ingenuity is but poor, if you cannot devise some excuse which will satisfy the Greeks; and in good sooth, Briennius, to this battle you go not, whether for your good or for your ill. Believe not that I will consent to your meeting either Count or Countess, whether in warlike combat or amorous parley. So you may at a word count upon remaining prisoner here until the hour appointed for such gross folly be past and over."

The Cæsar, perhaps, was not in his heart angry that his wife's pleasure was so bluntly and resolutely expressed against the intended combat. "If," said he, "you are determined to take my honor into your own keeping, I am here for the present your prisoner, nor have I the means of interfering with your pleasure. When once at liberty, the free exercise of my valor and my lance is once more my own."

"Be it so, sir paladin," said the Princess, very composedly. "I have good hope that neither of them will involve you with any of yon daredevils of Paris, whether male or female, and that we will regulate the pitch to which your courage soars by the estimation of Greek philosophy, and the judgment of our blessed Lady of Mercy, not her of the Broken Lances."

At this moment, an authoritative knock at the door alarmed the consultation of the Cæsar and the ladies.

CHAPTER XXVII

Physician. Be comforted, good madam; the great rage,
You see, is cured in him; and yet it is danger
To make him even o'er the time he has lost.
Desire him to go in; trouble him no more,
Till further settling.

King Lear.

We left the Emperor Alexius Comnenus at the bottom of a subterranean vault, with a lamp expiring, and having charge of a prisoner who seemed himself nearly reduced to the same extremity. For the first two or three moments he listened after his daughter's retiring footsteps. He grew impatient, and began to long for her to return before it was possible she could have traversed the path betwixt him and the summit of these gloomy stairs. A minute or two he endured with patience the absence of the assistance which he had sent her to summon; but strange suspicions began to cross his imagination. Could it be possible? Had she changed her purpose on account of the hard words which he had used towards her? Had she resolved to leave her father to his fate in his hour of utmost need? and was he to rely no longer upon the assistance which he had implored her to send?

The short time which the Princess trifled away in a sort of gallantry with the Varangian Hereward was magnified tenfold by the impatience of the Emperor, who began to think that she was gone to fetch the accomplices of the Cæsar to assault their prince in his defenseless condition, and carry into effect their half-disconcerted conspiracy.

After a considerable time, filled up with this feeling of agonizing uncertainty, he began at length, more composedly, to recollect the little chance there was that the Princess would, even for her own sake, resentful as she was in the highest degree of her husband's ill-behavior, join her resources to his, to the destruction of one who had so generally showed himself an indulgent and affectionate father. When he had adopted this better mood, a step was heard upon the staircase, and, after a long and unequal descent, Hereward, in his heavy armor, at length coolly arrived at the bottom

of the steps. Behind him, panting and trembling, partly with cold and partly with terror, came Douban, the slave well skilled in medicine.

"Welcome, good Edward! Welcome, Douban!" he said, "whose medical skill is sufficiently able to counterbalance the weight of years which hang upon him."

"Your Highness is gracious——" said Douban; but what he would have farther said was cut off by a violent fit of coughing, the consequence of his age, of his feeble habit, of the damps of the dungeon, and the rugged exercise of descending the long and difficult staircase.

"Thou art unaccustomed to visit thy patients in so rough an abode," said Alexius; "and, nevertheless, to the damps of these dreary regions state necessity obliges us to confine many who are no less our beloved subjects in reality than they are in title."

The medical man continued his cough, perhaps as an apology for not giving that answer of assent with which his conscience did not easily permit him to reply to an observation which, though stated by one who should know the fact, seemed not to be in itself altogether likely.

"Yes, my Douban," said the Emperor, "in this strong case of steel and adamant have we found it necessary to inclose the redoubted Ursel, whose fame is spread through the whole world, both for military skill, political wisdom, personal bravery, and other noble gifts, which we have been obliged to obscure for a time, in order that we might, at the fittest conjuncture, which is now arrived, restore them to the world in their full luster. Feel his pulse, therefore, Douban; consider him as one who hath suffered severe confinement, with all its privations, and is about to be suddenly restored to the full enjoyment of life and whatever renders life valuable."

"I will do my best," said Douban; "but your Majesty must consider that we work upon a frail and exhausted subject, whose health seems already well-nigh gone, and may perhaps vanish in an instant, like this pale and trembling light, whose precarious condition the life-breath of this unfortunate patient seems closely to resemble."

"Desire, therefore, good Douban, one or two of the mutes who serve in the interior, and who have repeatedly been thy assistants in such cases—or stay—Edward, thy motions will be more speedy; do thou go for the mutes; make them bring some kind of litter to transport the patient; and, Douban, do thou superintend the whole. Transport him

instantly to a suitable apartment, only taking care that it be secret, and let him enjoy the comforts of the bath, and whatever else may tend to restore his feeble animation, keeping in mind that he must, if possible, appear to-morrow in the field."

"That will be hard," said Douban, "after having been, it would appear, subjected to such fare and such usage as his fluctuating pulse intimates but too plainly."

"'Twas a mistake of the dungeon-keeper, the inhuman villain, who should not go without his reward," continued the Emperor, "had not Heaven already bestowed it by the strange means of a sylvan man or native of the woods, who yesterday put to death the jailer who meditated the death of his prisoner. Yes, my dear Douban, a private sentinel of our guards called the Immortal had well-nigh annihilated this flower of our trust, whom for a time we were compelled to immure in secret. Then, indeed, a rude hammer had dashed to pieces an unparalleled brilliant, but the fates have arrested such a misfortune."

The assistance having arrived, the physician, who seemed more accustomed to act than to speak, directed a bath to be prepared with medicated herbs, aud gave it as his opinion that the patient should not be disturbed till to-morrow's sun was high in the heavens. Ursel accordingly was assisted to the bath, which was employed according to the directions of the physician, but without affording any material symptoms of recovery. From thence he was transferred to a cheerful bedchamber, opening by an ample window to one of the terraces of the palace, which commanded an extensive prospect. These operations were performed upon a frame so extremely stupefied by previous suffering, so dead to the usual sensations of existence, that it was not till the sensibility should be gradually restored, by friction of the stiffened limbs and other means, that the leech hoped the mists of the intellect should at length begin to clear away.

Douban readily undertook to obey the commands of the Emperor, and remained by the bed of the patient until the dawn of morning, ready to support nature as far as the skill of leechcraft admitted.

From the mutes, much more accustomed to be the executioners of the Emperor's displeasure than of his humanity, Douban selected one man of milder mood, and by Alexius's order made him understand that the task in which he was engaged was to be kept most strictly secret, while the hardened slave was astonished to find that the attentions paid

to the sick were to be rendered with yet more mystery than the bloody offices of death and torture.

The passive patient received the various acts of attention which were rendered to him in silence ; and if not totally without consciousness, at least without a distinct comprehension of their object. After the soothing operation of the bath, and the voluptuous exchange of the rude and musty pile of straw on which he had stretched himself for years for a couch of the softest down, Ursel was presented with a sedative draught, slightly tinctured with an opiate. The balmy restorer of nature came thus invoked, and the captive sunk into a delicious slumber long unknown to him, and which seemed to occupy equally his mental faculties and his bodily frame, while the features were released from their rigid tenor, and the posture of the limbs, no longer disturbed by fits of cramp and sudden and agonizing twists and throes, seemed changed for a placid state of the most perfect ease and tranquillity.

The morn was already coloring the horizon, and the freshness of the breeze of dawn had insinuated itself into the lofty halls of the Palace of the Blacquernal, when a gentle tap at the door of the chamber awakened Douban, who, undisturbed from the calm state of his patient, had indulged himself in a brief repose. The door opened, and a figure appeared, disguised in the robes worn by an officer of the palace, and concealed beneath an artificial beard of great size, and of a white color, the features of the Emperor himself. "Douban," said Alexius, "how fares it with thy patient, whose safety is this day of such consequence to the Grecian state ?"

"Well, my lord," replied the physician—"excellently well ; and if he is not now disturbed, I will wager whatever skill I possess that nature, assisted by the art of the physician, will triumph over the damps and the unwholesome air of the impure dungeon. Only be prudent, my lord, and let not an untimely haste bring this Ursel forward into the contest ere he has arranged the disturbed current of his ideas, and recovered, in some degree, the spring of his mind and the powers of his body."

"I will rule my impatience," said the Emperor, "or rather, Douban, I will be ruled by thee. Thinkest thou he is awake ?"

"I am inclined to think so," said the leech, "but he opens not his eyes, and seems to me as if he absolutely resisted the natural impulse to rouse himself and look around him."

"Speak to him," said the Emperor, "let us know what is passing in his mind."

"It is at some risk," replied the physician, "but you shall be obeyed. Ursel," he said, approaching the bed of his blind patient; and then, in a louder tone, he repeated again —"Ursel—Ursel!"

"Peace—hush!" muttered the patient; "disturb not the blest in their ecstacy, nor again recall the most miserable of mortals to finish the draught of bitterness which his fate had compelled him to commence."

"Again—again," said the Emperor, aside to Douban—"try him yet again; it is of importance for me to know in what degree he possesses his senses, or in what measure they have disappeared from him."

"I would not, however," said the physician, "be the rash and guilty person who, by an ill-timed urgency, should produce a total alienation of mind, and plunge him back either into absolute lunacy or produce a stupor in which he might remain for a long period."

"Surely not," replied the Emperor; "my commands are those of one Christian to another, nor do I wish them farther obeyed than as they are consistent with the laws of God and man."

He paused for a moment after this declaration, and yet but few minutes had elapsed ere he again urged the leech to pursue the interrogation of his patient. "If you hold me not competent," said Douban, somewhat vain of the trust necessarily reposed in him, "to judge of the treatment of my patient, your Imperial Highness must take the risk and the trouble upon yourself."

"Marry, I shall," said the Emperor, "for the scruples of leeches are not to be indulged when the fate of kingdoms and the lives of monarchs are placed against them in the scales. Rouse thee, my noble Ursel; hear a voice with which thy ears were once well acquainted welcome thee back to glory and command. Look around thee, and see how the world smiles to welcome thee back from imprisonment to empire."

"Cunning fiend," said Ursel, "who usest the most wily baits in order to augment the misery of the wretched! Know, tempter, that I am conscious of the whole trick of the soothing images of last night—thy baths, thy beds, and thy bowers of bliss; but sooner shalt thou be able to bring a smile upon the cheek of St. Anthony the Eremite than induce me to curl mine after the fashion of earthly voluptuaries."

"Try it, foolish man," insisted the Emperor, "and trust

to the evidence of thy senses for the reality of the pleasures by which thou art now surrounded ; or, if thou art obstinate in thy lack of faith, tarry as thou art for a single moment, and I will bring with me a being so unparalleled in her loveliness that a single glance of her were worth the restoration of thine eyes, were it only to look upon her for a moment." So saying, he left the apartment.

"Traitor," said Ursel, "and deceiver of old, bring no one hither ; and strive not, by shadowy and ideal forms of beauty, to increase the delusion that gilds my prison-house for a moment, in order, doubtless, to destroy totally the spark of reason, and then exchange this earthly hell for a dungeon in the infernal regions themselves."

"His mind is somewhat shattered," mused the physician, "which is often the consequence of a long solitary confinement. I marvel much," was his farther thought, "if the Emperor can shape out any rational service which this man can render him, after being so long immured in so horrible a dungeon. Thou thinkest, then," continued he, addressing the patient, "that the seeming release of last night, with its baths and refreshments, was only a delusive dream, without any reality ?"

"Ay—what else ?" answered Ursel.

"And that the arousing thyself, as we desire thee to do, would be but a resigning to a vain temptation, in order to wake to more unhappiness than formerly ?"

"Even so," returned the patient.

"What, then, are thy thoughts of the Emperor, by whose command thou sufferest so severe a restraint ?"

Perhaps Douban wished he had forborne this question, for, in the very moment when he put it, the door of the chamber opened and the Emperor entered, with his daughter hanging upon his arm, dressed with simplicity, yet with becoming splendor. She had found time, it seems, to change her dress for a white robe, which resembled a kind of mourning, the chief ornament of which was a diamond chaplet, of inestimable value, which surrounded and bound the long sable tresses, that reached from her head to her waist. Terrified almost to death, she had been surprised by her father in the company of her husband the Cæsar and her mother ; and the same thundering mandate had at once ordered Briennius, in the character of a more than suspected traitor, under the custody of a strong guard of Varangians and commanded her to attend her father to the bedchamber of Ursel, in which she now stood ; resolved, however, that she would

stick by the sinking fortunes of her husband, even in the last extremity, yet no less determined that she would not rely upon her own entreaties or remonstrances until she should see whether her father's interference was likely to reassume a resolved and positive character. Hastily as the plans of Alexius had been formed, and hastily as they had been disconcerted by accident, there remained no slight chance that he might be forced to come round to the purpose on which his wife and daughter had fixed their heart, the forgiveness, namely, of the guilty Nicephorus Briennius. To his astonishment, and not perhaps greatly to his satisfaction, he heard the patient deeply engaged with the physician in canvassing his own character.

"Think not," said Ursel in reply to him, "that, though I am immured in this dungeon, and treated as something worse than an outcast of humanity—and although I am, moreover, deprived of my eyesight, the dearest gift of Heaven—think not, I say, though I suffer all this by the cruel will of Alexius Comnenus, that therefore I hold him to be mine enemy; on the contrary, it is by his means that the blinded and miserable prisoner has been taught to seek a liberty far more unconstrained than this poor earth can afford, and a vision far more clear than any Mount Pisgah on this wretched side of the grave can give us. Shall I therefore account the Emperor among mine enemies—he who has taught me the vanity of earthly things, the nothingness of earthly enjoyments, and the pure hope of a better world, as a certain exchange for the misery of the present? No."

The Emperor had stood somewhat disconcerted at the beginning of this speech, but hearing it so very unexpectedly terminate, as he was willing to suppose, much in his own favor, he threw himself into an attitude which was partly that of a modest person listening to his own praises, and partly that of a man highly struck with the commendations heaped upon him by a generous adversary.

"My friend," he said aloud, "how truly do you read my purpose, when you suppose that the knowledge which men of your disposition can extract from evil was all the experience which I wished you to derive from a captivity protracted by adverse circumstances far—very far beyond my wishes! Let me embrace the generous man who knows so well how to construe the purpose of a perplexed but still faithful friend."

The patient raised himself in his bed.

"Hold, there," he said; "methinks my faculties begin to collect themselves. Yes," he muttered, "that is the treacherous voice which first bid me welcome as a friend, and then commanded fiercely that I should be deprived of the sight of my eyes. Increase thy rigor as thou wilt, Comnenus—add, if thou canst, to the torture of my confinement; but, since I cannot see thy hypocritical and inhuman features, spare me, in mercy, the sound of a voice more distressing to mine ear than toads, than serpents, than whatever nature has most offensive and disgusting."

This speech was delivered with so much energy, that it was in vain that the Emperor strove to interrupt its tenor, although he himself, as well as Douban and his daughter, heard a great deal more of the language of unadorned and natural passion than he had counted upon.

"Raise thy head, rash man," he said, "and charm thy tongue, ere it proceed in a strain which may cost thee dear. Look at me, and see if I have not reserved a reward capable of atoning for all the evil which thy folly may charge to my account."

Hitherto the prisoner had remained with his eyes obstinately shut, regarding the imperfect recollection he had of sights which had been before his eyes the foregoing evening as the mere suggestion of a deluded imagination, if not actually presented by some seducing spirit. But now, when his eyes fairly encountered the stately figure of the Emperor, and the graceful form of his lovely daughter, painted in the tender rays of the morning dawn, he ejaculated faintly, "I see—I see!" and with that ejaculation fell back on the pillow in a swoon, which instantly found employment for Douban and his restoratives.

"A most wonderful cure indeed!" exclaimed the physician, "and the height of my wishes would be to possess such another miraculous restorative."

"Fool!" said the Emperor; "canst thou not conceive that what has never been taken away is restored with little difficulty? He was made," he said, lowering his voice, "to undergo a painful operation, which led him to believe that the organs of sight were destroyed; and as light scarcely ever visited him, and when it did, only in doubtful and almost invisible glimmerings, the prevailing darkness, both physical and mental, that surrounded him prevented him from being sensible of the existence of that precious faculty, of which he imagined himself bereft. Perhaps thou wilt ask my reason for inflicting upon him so strange a deception?

Simply it was that, being by it conceived incapable of reigning, his memory might pass out of the minds of the public, while, at the same time, I reserved his eyesight, that, in case occasion should call, it might be in my power once more to liberate him from his dungeon, and employ, as I now propose to do, his courage and talents in the service of the empire, to counterbalance those of other conspirators."

"And can your Imperial Highness," said Douban, "hope that you have acquired this man's duty and affection by the conduct you have observed to him?"

"I cannot tell," answered the Emperor; "that must be as futurity shall determine. All I know is, that it is no fault of mine if Ursel does not reckon freedom and a long course of empire—perhaps sanctioned by an alliance with our own blood—and the continued enjoyment of the precious organs of eyesight, of which a less scrupulous man would have deprived him, against a maimed and darkened existence."

"Since such is your Highness's opinion and resolution," said Douban, "it is for me to aid and not to counteract it. Permit me, therefore, to pray your Highness and the Princess to withdraw, that I may use such remedies as may confirm a mind which has been so strangely shaken, and restore to him fully the use of those eyes of which he has been so long deprived."

"I am content, Douban," said the Emperor; "but take notice, Ursel is not totally at liberty until he has expressed the resolution to become actually mine. It may behove both him and thee to know that, although there is no purpose of remitting him to the dungeons of the Blacquernal Palace, yet if he, or any on his part, should aspire to head a party in these feverish times, by the honor of a gentleman, to swear a Frankish oath, he shall find that he is not out of the reach of the battle-axes of my Varangians. I trust to thee to communicate this fact, which concerns alike him and all who have interest in his fortunes. Come, daughter, we will withdraw, and leave the leech with his patient. Take notice, Douban, it is of importance that you acquaint me the very first moment when the patient can hold rational communication with me."

Alexius and his accomplished daughter departed accordingly.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Bears yet a precious jewel in its head.
As You Like It.

FROM a terraced roof of the Blacquernal Palace, accessible by a sash-door, which opened from the bedchamber of Ursel, there was commanded one of the most lovely and striking views which the romantic neighborhood of Constantinople afforded.

After suffering him to repose and rest his agitated faculties, it was to this place that the physician led his patient; for, when somewhat composed, he had of himself requested to be permitted to verify the truth of his restored eyesight by looking out once more upon the majestic face of nature.

On the one hand, the scene which he beheld was a masterpiece of human art. The proud city, ornamented with stately buildings, as became the capital of the world, showed a succession of glittering spires and orders of architecture, some of them chaste and simple, like those the capitals of which were borrowed from baskets-full of acanthus; some deriving the fluting of their shafts from the props made originally to support the lances of the earlier Greeks—forms simple, yet more graceful in their simplicity than any which human ingenuity has been able since to invent. With the most splendid specimens which ancient art could afford of those strictly classical models were associated those of a later age, where more modern taste had endeavored at improvement, and, by mixing the various orders, had produced such as were either composite or totally out of rule. The size of the buildings in which they were displayed, however, procured them respect; nor could even the most perfect judge of architecture avoid being struck by the grandeur of their extent and effect, although hurt by the incorrectness of the taste in which they were executed. Arches of triumph, towers, obelisks, and spires, designed for various purposes, rose up into the air in confused magnificence; while the lower view was filled by the streets of the city, the

domestic habitations forming long narrow alleys, on either side of which the houses arose to various and unequal heights, but, being generally finished with terraced coverings, thickset with plants and flowers, and fountains, had, when seen from an eminence, a more noble and interesting aspect than is ever afforded by the sloping and uniform roofs of streets in the capitals of the north of Europe.

It has taken us some time to give in words the idea which was at a single glance conveyed to Ursel, and affected him at first with great pain. His eyeballs had been long strangers to that daily exercise which teaches us the habit of correcting the scenes as they appear to our sight, by the knowledge which we derive from the use of our other senses. His idea of distance was so confused that it seemed as if all the spires, turrets, and minarets which he beheld were crowded forward upon his eyeballs, and almost touching them. With a shriek of horror, Ursel turned himself to the further side, and cast his eyes upon a different scene. Here also he saw towers, steeples, and turrets, but they were those of the churches and public buildings beneath his feet, reflected from the dazzling piece of water which formed the harbor of Constantinople, and which, from the abundance of wealth which it transported to the city, was well termed the Golden Horn. In one place, this superb basin was lined with quays, where stately dromonds and argosies unloaded their wealth; while, by the shore of the haven, galleys, feluccas, and other small craft idly flapped the singularly shaped and snow-white pinions which served them for sails. In other places, the Golden Horn lay shrouded in a verdant mantle of trees, where the private gardens of wealthy or distinguished individuals, or places of public recreation, shot down upon and were bounded by the glassy waters.

On the Bosphorus, which might be seen in the distance, the little fleet of Tancred was lying in the same station they had gained during the night, which was fitted to command the opposite landing; this their general had preferred to a midnight descent upon Constantinople, not knowing whether, so coming, they might be received as friends or enemies. This delay, however, had given the Greeks an opportunity, either by the orders of Alexius, or the equally powerful mandates of some of the conspirators, to tow six ships of war, full of armed men, and provided with the maritime offensive weapons peculiar to the Greeks at that period, which they had moored so as exactly to cover the place where the troops of Tancred must necessarily land.

This preparation gave some surprise to the valiant Tancred, who did not know that such vessels had arrived in the harbor from Lemnos on the preceding night. The undaunted courage of that prince was, however, in no respect to be skaken by the degree of unexpected danger with which his adventure now appeared to be attended.

This splendid view, from the description of which we have in some degree digressed, was seen by the physician and Ursel from a terrace the loftiest almost on the Palace of the Blacquernal. To the cityward, it was bounded by a solid wall of considerable height, giving a resting-place for the roof of a lower building, which, sloping outward, broke to the view the vast height, unobscured otherwise save by a high and massy balustrade, composed of bronze, which, to the havenward, sunk sheer down upon an uninterrupted precipice.

No sooner, therefore, had Ursel turned his eyes that way than, though placed far from the brink of the terrace, he exclaimed, with a shriek, "Save me—save me, if you are not indeed the destined executors of the Emperor's will."

"We are indeed such," said Douban, "to save and if possible to bring you to complete recovery; but by no means to do you injury, or to suffer it to be offered by others."

"Guard me then from myself," said Ursel, "and save me from the reeling and insane desire which I feel to plunge myself into the abyss to the edge of which you have guided me."

"Such a giddy and dangerous temptation is," said the physician, "common to those who have not for a long time looked down from precipitous heights, and are suddenly brought to them. Nature, however bounteous, hath not provided for the cessation of our faculties for years and for their sudden resumption in full strength and vigor. An interval, longer or shorter, must needs intervene. Can you not believe this terrace a safe station while you have my support and that of this faithful slave?"

"Certainly," said Ursel; "but permit me to turn my face towards this stone wall, for I cannot bear to look at the flimsy piece of wire which is the only battlement of defense that interposes betwixt me and the precipice." He spoke of the bronze balustrade, six feet high, and massive in proportion. Thus saying, and holding fast by the physician's arm, Ursel, though himself a younger and more able man, trembled, and moved his feet as slowly as if made of lead, until he reached the sashed-door, where stood a kind of bal-

cony seat, in which he placed himself. "Here," he said, "will I remain."

"And here," said Douban, "will I make the communication of the Emperor, which it is necessary you should be prepared to reply to. It places you, you will observe, at your own disposal for liberty or captivity, but it conditions for your resigning that sweet but sinful morsel termed revenge, which, I must not conceal from you, chance appears willing to put into your hand. You know the degree of rivalry in which you have been held by the Emperor, and you know the measure of evil you have sustained at his hand. The question is, Can you forgive what has taken place?"

"Let me wrap my head round with my mantle," said Ursel, "to dispel this dizziness which still oppresses my poor brain, and as soon as the power of recollection is granted to me, you shall know my sentiments."

He sunk upon the seat, muffled in the way which he described, and after a few minutes' reflection, with a trepidation which argued the patient still to be under the nervous feeling of extreme horror mixed with terror, he addressed Douban thus—"The operation of wrong and cruelty, in the moment when they are first inflicted, excites, of course, the utmost resentment of the sufferer; nor is there, perhaps, a passion which lives so long in his bosom as the natural desire of revenge. If, then, during the first month, when I lay stretched upon my bed of want and misery, you had offered me an opportunity of revenge upon my cruel oppressor, the remnant of miserable life which remained to me should have been willingly bestowed to purchase it. But a suffering of weeks, or even months, must not be compared in effect with that of years. For a short space of endurance, the body, as well as the mind, retains that vigorous habit which holds the prisoner still connected with life, and teaches him to thrill at the long-forgotten chain of hopes, of wishes, of disappointments, and mortifications which affected his former existence. But the wounds become callous as they harden, and other and better feelings occupy their place, while they gradually die away in forgetfulness. The enjoyments, the amusements of this world occupy no part of his time upon whom the gates of despair have once closed. I tell thee, my kind physician, that for a season, in an insane attempt to effect my liberty, I cut through a large portion of the living rock. But Heaven cured me of so foolish an idea; and if I did not actually come to love Alexius Comnenus—for how could that have been a possible effect in any rational state

of my intellects?—yet as I became convinced of my own crimes, sins, and follies, the more and more I was also persuaded that Alexius was but the agent through whom Heaven exercised a dearly-purchased right of punishing me for my manifold offences and transgressions; and that it was not therefore upon the Emperor that my resentment ought to visit itself. And I can now say to thee that, so far as a man who has undergone so dreadful a change can be supposed to know his own mind, I feel no desire either to rival Alexius in a race for empire or to avail myself of any of the various proffers which he proposes to me as the price of withdrawing my claim. Let him keep unpurchased the crown, for which he has paid, in my opinion, a price which it is not worth."

"This is extraordinary stoicism, noble Ursel," answered the physician Douban. "Am I then to understand that you reject the fair offers of Alexius, and desire, instead of all which he is willing, nay, anxious, to bestow, to be committed safely back to thy old blinded dungeon in the Blacquernal, that you may continue at ease those pietistic meditations which have already conducted thee to so extravagant a conclusion?"

"Physician," said Ursel, while a shuddering fit that affected his whole body testified his alarm at the alternative proposed, "one would imagine thine own profession might have taught thee that no mere mortal man, unless predestined to be a glorified saint, could ever prefer darkness to the light of day, blindness itself to the enjoyment of the power of sight, the pangs of starving to competent sustenance, or the damps of a dungeon to the free air of God's creation. No! it may be virtue to do so, but to such a pitch mine does not soar. All I require of the Emperor for standing by him with all the power my name can give him at this crisis is, that he will provide for my reception as a monk in some of those pleasant and well-endowed seminaries of piety to which his devotion, or his fears, have given rise. Let me not be again the object of his suspicion, the operation of which is more dreadful than that of being the object of his hate. Forgotten by power, as I have myself lost the remembrance of those that wielded it, let me find my way to the grave, unnoticed, unconstrained, at liberty, in possession of my dim and disused organs of sight, and, above all, at peace."

"If such be thy serious and earnest wish, noble Ursel," said the physician, "I myself have no hesitation to warrant to thee the full accomplishment of thy religious and moderate desires. But, bethink thee, thou art once more an in-

habitant of the court, in which thou mayst obtain what thou wilt to-day, while to-morrow, shouldst thou regret thy indifference, it may be thy utmost entreaty will not suffice to gain for thee the slightest extension of thy present conditions."

"Be it so," said Ursel; "I will then stipulate for another condition, which indeed has only reference to this day. I will solicit his imperial Majesty, with all humility, to spare me the pain of a personal treaty between himself and me, and that he will be satisfied with the solemn assurance that I am most willing to do in his favor all that he is desirous of dictating; while, on the other hand, I desire only the execution of those moderate conditions of my future aliment which I have already told thee at length."

"But wherefore," said Douban, "shouldst thou be afraid of announcing to the Emperor thy disposition to an agreement which cannot be esteemed otherwise than extremely moderate on thy part? Indeed, I fear the Emperor will insist on a brief personal conference."

"I am not ashamed," said Ursel, "to confess the truth. It is true that I have, or think I have, renounced what the Scripture calls the pride of life; but the old Adam still lives within us, and maintains against the better part of our nature an inextinguishable quarrel, easy to be aroused from its slumber, but as difficult to be again couched in peace. While last night I but half understood that mine enemy was in my presence, and while my faculties performed but half their duty in recalling his deceitful and hated accents, did not my heart throb in my bosom with all the agitation of a taken bird, and shall I again have to enter into a personal treaty with the man who, be his general conduct what it may, has been the constant and unprovoked cause of my unequaled misery? Douban, no! to listen to his voice again were to hear an alarm sounded to every violent and vindictive passion of my heart; and though, may Heaven so help me as my intentions towards him are upright, yet it is impossible for me to listen to his professions with a chance of safety either to him or to myself."

"If you be so minded," replied Douban, "I shall only repeat to him your stipulation, and you must swear to him that you will strictly observe it. Without this being done, it must be difficult, or perhaps impossible, to settle the league of which both are desirous."

"Amen!" said Ursel, "and as I am pure in my purpose, and resolved to keep it to the uttermost, so may

Heaven guard me from the influence of precipitate revenge, ancient grudge, or new quarrel!"

An authoritative knock at the door of the sleeping-chamber was now heard, and Ursel, relieved by more powerful feelings from the giddiness of which he had complained, walked firmly into the bedroom, and, seating himself, waited with averted eyes the entrance of the person who demanded admittance, and who proved to be no other than Alexius Comnenus.

The Emperor appeared at the door in a warlike dress, suited for the decoration of a prince who was to witness a combat in the lists fought out before him.

"Sage Douban," he said, "has our esteemed prisoner, Ursel, made his choice between our peace and enmity?"

"He hath, my lord," replied the physician, "embraced the lot of that happy portion of mankind whose hearts and lives are devoted to the service of your Majesty's government."

"He will then this day," continued the Emperor, "render me the office of putting down all those who may pretend to abet insurrection in his name, and under pretext of his wrongs?"

"He will, my lord," replied the physician, "act to the fullest the part which you require."

"And in what way," said the Emperor, adopting his most gracious tone of voice, "would our faithful Ursel desire that services like these, rendered in the hour of extreme need, should be acknowledged by the Emperor?"

"Simply," answered Douban, "by saying nothing upon the subject. He desires only that all jealousies between you and him may be henceforth forgotten, and that he may be admitted into one of your Highness's monastic institutions, with leave to dedicate the rest of his life to the worship of Heaven and its saints."

"Hath he persuaded thee of this, Douban?" said the Emperor, in a low and altered voice. "By Heaven! when I consider from what prison he was brought, and in what guise he inhabited it, I cannot believe in this gall-less disposition. He must at least speak to me himself, ere I can believe, in some degree, the transformation of the fiery Ursel into a being so little capable of feeling the ordinary impulses of mankind."

"Hear me, Alexius Comnenus," said the prisoner; "and so may thine own prayers to Heaven find access and acceptation, as thou believest the words which I speak to thee

in simplicity of heart. If thine empire of Greece were made of coined gold, it would hold out no bait for my acceptance; nor, I thank Heaven, have even the injuries I have experienced at thy hand, cruel and extensive as they have been, impressed upon me the slightest desire of requiting treachery with treachery. Think of me as thou wilt, so thou seek'st not again to exchange words with me: and believe me that, when thou hast put me under the most rigid of thy ecclesiastical foundations, the discipline, the fare, and the vigils will be far superior to the existence falling to the share of those whom the king delights to honor, and who therefore must afford the king their society whenever they are summoned to do so."

"It is hardly for me," said the physician, "to interpose in so high a matter; yet, as trusted both by the noble Ursel and by his Highness the Emperor, I have made a brief abstract of these short conditions to be kept by the high parties towards each other, *sub crimine falsi.*"

The Emperor protracted the intercourse with Ursel until he more fully explained to him the occasion which he should have that very day for his services. When they parted, Alexius, with a great show of affection, embraced his late prisoner, while it required all the self-command and stoicism of Ursel to avoid expressing in plain terms the extent to which he abhorred the person who thus caressed him.

CHAPTER XXIX

O, conspiracy!
Sham'st thou to show thy dangerous brow by night,
When evils are most free? O, then, by day,
Where wilt thou find a cavern dark enough
To mask thy monstrous visage? Seek none, conspiracy:
Hide it in smiles and affability;
For if thou path, thy native semblance on,
Not Erebus itself were dim enough
To hide thee from prevention.

Julius Cæsar.

THE important morning at last arrived on which, by the imperial proclamation, the combat between the Cæsar and Robert Count of Paris was appointed to take place. This was a circumstance in a great measure foreign to the Grecian manners, and to which, therefore, the people annexed different ideas from those which were associated with the same solemn decision of God, as the Latins called it, by the Western nations. The consequence was a vague but excessive agitation among the people, who connected the extraordinary strife which they were to witness with the various causes which had been whispered abroad as likely to give occasion to some general insurrection of a great and terrible nature.

By the imperial order, regular lists had been prepared for the combat, with opposite gates, or entrances, as was usual, for the admittance of the two champions; and it was understood that the appeal was to be made to the Divinity by each, according to the forms prescribed by the church of which the combatants were respectively members. The situation of these lists was on the side of the shore adjoining on the west to the continent. At no great distance, the walls of the city were seen, of various architecture, composed of lime and of stone, and furnished with no less than four-and-twenty gates, or posterns, five of which regarded the land and nineteen the water. All this formed a beautiful prospect, much of which is still visible. The town itself is about nineteen miles in circumference; and as it is on all sides surrounded with lofty cypresses, its general appearance is that of a city arising out of a stately wood of

these magnificent trees, partly shrouding the pinnacles, obelisks, and minarets which then marked the site of many noble Christian temples, but now, generally speaking, intimate the position of as many Mohammedan mosques.

These lists, for the convenience of spectators, were surrounded on all sides by long rows of seats, sloping downwards. In the middle of these seats, and exactly opposite the center of the lists, was a high throne, erected for the Emperor himself, and which was separated from the more vulgar galleries by a circuit of wooden barricades, which an experienced eye could perceive might, in case of need, be made serviceable for purposes of defense.

The lists were sixty yards in length, by perhaps about forty in breadth, and these afforded ample space for the exercise of the combat, both on horseback and on foot. Numerous bands of the Greek citizens began, with the very break of day, to issue from the gates and posterns of the city, to examine and wonder at the construction of the lists, pass their criticisms upon the purposes of the peculiar parts of the fabric, and occupy places, to secure them for the spectacle. Shortly after arrived a large band of those soldiers who were called the Roman Immortals. These entered without ceremony, and placed themselves on either hand of the wooden barricade which fenced the Emperor's seat. Some of them took even a greater liberty; for, affecting to be pressed against the boundary, there were individuals who approached the partition itself, and seemed to meditate climbing over it, and placing themselves on the same side with the Emperor. Some old domestic slaves of the household now showed themselves, as if for the purpose of preserving this sacred circle for Alexius and his court; and, in proportion as the Immortals began to show themselves encroaching and turbulent, the strength of the defenders of the prohibited precincts seemed gradually to increase.

There was, though scarcely to be observed, besides the grand access to the imperial seat from without, another opening also from the outside, secured by a very strong door, by which different persons received admission beneath the seats destined for the imperial party. These persons, by their length of limb, breadth of shoulders, by the fur of their cloaks, and especially by the redoubted battle-axes which all of them bore, appeared to be Varangians; but, although neither dressed in their usual habit of pomp nor in their more effectual garb of war, still, when narrowly examined, they might be seen to possess their usual offensive weapons.

These men, entering in separate and straggling parties, might be observed to join the slaves of the interior of the palace in opposing the intrusion of the Immortals upon the seat of the Emperor and the benches around. Two or three Immortals, who had actually made good their frolic and climbed over the division, were flung back again, very unceremoniously, by the barbaric strength and sinewy arms of the Varangians.

The people around and in the adjacent galleries, most of whom had the air of citizens in their holyday dresses, commented a good deal on these proceedings, and were inclined strongly to make part with the Immortals. "It was a shame to the Emperor," they said, "to encourage these British barbarians to interpose themselves by violence between his person and the Immortal cohorts of the city, who were in some sort his own children."

Stephanos, the gymnastic, whose bulky strength and stature rendered him conspicuous amid this party, said, without hesitation, "If there are two people here who will join in saying that the Immortals are unjustly deprived of their right of guarding the Emperor's person, here is the hand that shall place them beside the imperial chair."

"Not so," quoth a centurion of the Immortals, whom we have already introduced to our readers by the name of Harpax—"not so, Stephanos; that happy time may arrive, but it is not yet come, my gem of the circus. Thou knowest that on this occasion it is one of these counts, or Western Franks, who undertakes the combat; and the Varangians, who call these people their enemies, have some reason to claim a precedency in guarding the lists, which it might not at this moment be convenient to dispute with them. Why, man, if thou wert half so witty as thou art long, thou wouldst be sensible that it were bad woodmanship to raise the halloo upon the game ere it had been driven within compass of the nets."

While the athlete rolled his huge gray eyes as if to conjure out the sense of this intimation, his little friend Lysimachus, the artist, putting himself to pain to stand upon his tiptoe and look intelligent, said, approaching as near as he could to Harpax's ear, "Thou mayst trust me, gallant centurion, that this man of mold and muscle shall neither start like a babbling hound on a false scent nor become mute and inert when the general signal is given. But tell me," said he speaking very low, and for that purpose mounting a bench, which brought him on a level with the centurion's ear,

"would it not have been better that a strong guard of the valiant Immortals had been placed in this wooden citadel, to ensure the object of the day?"

"Without question," said the centurion, "it was so meant; but these strolling Varangians have altered their station of their own authority."

"Were it not well," said Lysimachus, "that you who are greatly more numerous than the barbarians, should begin a fray before more of these strangers arrive?"

"Content ye, friend," said the centurion, coldly, "we know our time. An attack commenced too early would be worse than thrown away, nor would an opportunity occur of executing our project in the fitting time, if an alarm were prematurely given at this moment."

So saying, he shuffled off among his fellow-soldiers, so as to avoid suspicious intercourse with such persons as were only concerned with the civic portion of the conspirators.

As the morning advanced, and the sun took a higher station in the horizon, the various persons whom curiosity, or some more decided motive, brought to see the proposed combat were seen streaming from different parts of the town, and rushing to occupy such accommodation as the circuit round the lists afforded them. In their road to the place where preparation for combat was made, they had to ascend a sort of cape, which, in the form of a small hill, projected into the Hellespont, and the butt of which, connecting it with the shore, afforded a considerable ascent, and, of course, a more commanding view of the strait between Europe and Asia than either the immediate vicinity of the city or the still lower ground upon which the lists were erected. In passing this height, the earlier visitants of the lists made little or no halt; but after a time, when it became obvious that those who had hurried forward to the place of combat were lingering there without any object or occupation, they that followed them in the same route, with natural curiosity, paid a tribute to the landscape, bestowing some attention on its beauty, and paused to see what auguries could be collected from the water which were likely to have any concern in indicating the fate of the events that were to take place. Some straggling seamen were the first who remarked that a squadron of the Greek small craft (being that of Tancred) were in the act of making their way from Asia, and threatening a descent upon Constantinople.

"It is strange," said a person, by rank the captain of a galley, "that these small vessels, which were ordered to re-

turn to Constantinople as soon as they disembarked the Latins, should have remained so long at Scutari, and should not be rowing back to the imperial city until this time, on the second day after their departure from thence."

"I pray to Heaven," said another of the same profession, "that these seamen may come alone. It seems to me as if their ensign-staffs, bowsprits, and topmasts were decorated with the same ensigns, or nearly the same, with those which the Latins displayed upon them when, by the Emperor's order, they were transported towards Palestine; so methinks the voyage back again resembles that of a fleet of merchant vessels who have been prevented from discharging their cargo at the place of their destination."

"There is little good," said one of the politicians whom we formerly noticed, "in dealing with such commodities, whether they are imported or exported. Yon ample banner which streams over the foremost galley intimates the presence of a chieftain of no small rank among the counts, whether it be for valor or for nobility."

The seafaring leader added, with the voice of one who hints alarming tidings, "They seem to have got to a point in the straits as high as will enable them to run down with the tide, and clear the cape which we stand on, although with what purpose they aim to land so close beneath the walls of the city, he is a wiser man than I who pretends to determine."

"Assuredly," returned his comrade, "the intention is not a kind one. The wealth of the city has temptations to a poor people, who only value the iron which they possess as affording them the means of procuring the gold which they covet."

"Ay, brother," answered Demetrius the politician, "but see you not, lying at anchor within this bay which is formed by the cape, and at the very point where these heretics are likely to be carried by the tide, six strong vessels, having the power of sending forth, not merely showers of darts and arrows, but of Grecian fire, as it is called, from their hollow decks? If these Frank gentry continue directing their course upon the imperial city, being, as they are,

> Propago
> Contemptrix Superûm sane, sævæque avidissima cædis,
> Et violenta,

we shall speedily see a combat better worth witnessing than that announced by the great trumpet of the Varangians. If

you love me, let us sit down here for a moment, and see how this matter is to end."

"An excellent motion, my ingenious friend," said Lascaris, which was the name of the other citizen; "but, bethink you, shall we not be in danger from the missiles with which the audacious Latins will not fail to return the Greek fire, if, according to your conjecture, it shall be poured upon them by the imperial squadron?"

"That is not ill argued, my friend," said Demetrius; "but know that you have to do with a man who has been in such extremities before now; and if such a discharge should open from the sea, I would propose to you to step back some fifty yards inland, and thus to interpose the very crest of the cape between us and the discharge of missiles; a mere child might thus learn to face them without any alarm."

"You are a wise man, neighbor," said Lascaris, "and possess such a mixture of valor and knowledge as becomes a man whom a friend might be supposed safely to risk his life with. There be those, for instance, who cannot show you the slightest glimpse of what is going on without bringing you within peril of your life; whereas you, my worthy friend Demetrius, between your accurate knowledge of military affairs and your regard for your friend, are sure to show him all that is to be seen without the least risk to a person who is naturally unwilling to think of exposing himself to injury. But, Holy Virgin! what is the meaning of that red flag which the Greek admiral has this instant hoisted?"

"Why, you see, neighbor," answered Demetrius, "yonder Western heretic continues to advance without minding the various signs which our admiral has made to him to desist, and now he hoists the bloody colors, as if a man should clench his fist and say, 'If you persevere in your uncivil intention, I will do so and so.'"

"By St. Sophia," said Lascaris, "and that is giving him fair warning. But what is it the imperial admiral is about to do?"

"Run—run, friend Lascaris," said Demetrius, "or you will see more of that than perchance you have any curiosity for."

Accordingly, to add the strength of example to precept, Demetrius himself girt up his loins, and retreated with the most edifying speed to the opposite side of the ridge, accompanied by the greater part of the crowd, who had tarried there to witness the contest which the newsmonger prom-

ised, and were determined to take his word for their own safety. The sound and sight which had alarmed Demetrius was the discharge of a large portion of Greek fire, which perhaps may be best compared to one of those immense Congreve rockets of the present day, which takes on its shoulders a small grapnel or anchor, and proceeds groaning through the air, like a fiend overburdened by the mandate of some inexorable magician, and of which the operation was so terrifying, that the crews of the vessels attacked by this strange weapon frequently forsook every means of defense and run themselves ashore. One of the principal ingredients of this dreadful fire was supposed to be naphtha, or the bitumen which is collected on the banks of the Dead Sea, and which, when in a state of ignition, could only be extinguished by a very singular mixture, and which it was not likely to come in contact with. It produced a thick smoke and loud explosion, and was capable, says Gibbon, of communicating its flames with equal vehemence in descent or lateral progress.* In sieges, it was poured from the ramparts, or launched, like our bombs, in red-hot balls of stone or iron, or it was darted in flax twisted round arrows and in javelins. It was considered as a state secret of the greatest importance; and for wellnigh four centuries it was unknown to the Mohammedans. But at length the composition was discovered by the Saracens, and used by them for repelling the crusaders, and overpowering the Greeks, upon whose side it had at one time been the most formidable implement of defense. Some exaggeration we must allow for a barbarous period; but there seems no doubt that the general description of the crusader Joinville should be admitted as correct. "It came flying through the air," says that good knight, "like a winged dragon, about the thickness of a hogshead, with the report of thunder and the speed of lightning, and the darkness of the night was dispelled by this horrible illumination."

Not only the bold Demetrius and his pupil Lascaris, but all the crowd whom they influenced, fled manfully when the commodore of the Greeks fired the first discharge; and as the other vessels in the squadron followed his example, the heavens were filled with the unusual and outrageous noise, while the smoke was so thick as to darken the very air. As the fugitives passed the crest of the hill, they saw the seaman whom we formerly mentioned as a spectator snugly

* For a full account of the Greek fire, see Gibbon, chapter lii.

reclining under cover of a dry ditch, where he managed so as to secure himself as far as possible from any accident. He could not, however, omit breaking his jest on the politicians.

"What, ho!" he cried, "my good friends," without raising himself above the counterscarp of his ditch, "will you not remain upon your station long enough to finish that hopeful lecture upon battle by sea and land which you had so happy an opportunity of commencing? Believe me, the noise is more alarming than hurtful; the fire is all pointed in a direction opposite to yours, and if one of those dragons which you see does happen to fly landward instead of seaward, it is but the mistake of some cabin-boy, who has used his linstock with more willingness than ability."

Demetrius and Lascaris just heard enough of the naval hero's harangue to acquaint them with the new danger with which they might be assailed by the possible misdirection of the weapons, and, rushing down towards the lists at the head of a crowd half desperate with fear, they hastily propagated the appalling news that the Latins were coming back from Asia with the purpose of landing in arms, pillaging, and burning the city.

The uproar, in the mean time, of this unexpected occurrence, was such as altogether to vindicate, in public opinion, the reported cause, however exaggerated. The thunder of the Greek fire came successively, one hard upon the other, and each in his turn spread a blot of black smoke upon the face of the landscape, which, thickened by so many successive clouds, seemed at last, like that raised by a sustained fire of modern artillery, to overshadow the whole horizon.

The small squadron of Tancred were completely hid from view in the surging volumes of darkness which the breath of the weapons of the enemy had spread around him; and it seemed by a red light, which began to show itself among the thickest of the veil of darkness, that one of the flotilla at least had caught fire. Yet the Latins resisted, with an obstinacy worthy of their own courage and the fame of their celebrated leader. Some advantage they had, on account of their small size and their lowness in the water, as well as the clouded state of the atmosphere, which rendered them difficult marks for the fire of the Greeks.

To increase these advantages, Tancred, as well by boats as by the kind of rude signals made use of at the period, dispersed orders to his fleet that each bark, disregarding the fate of the others, should press forward individually, and

that the men from each should be on shore wheresoever and howsoever they could effect that maneuver. Tancred himself set a noble example: he was on board a stout vessel, fenced in some degree against the effect of the Greek fire by being in a great measure covered with raw hides, which hides had also been recently steeped in water. This vessel contained upwards of a hundred valiant warriors, several of them of knightly order, who had all night toiled at the humble labors of the oar, and now in the morning applied their chivalrous hands to the arblast and to the bow, which were in general accounted the weapons of persons of a lower rank. Thus armed and thus manned, Prince Tancred bestowed upon his bark the full velocity which wind, and tide, and oar could enable her to obtain, and placing her in the situation to profit by them as much as his maritime skill could direct, he drove with the speed of lightning among the vessels of Lemnos, plying on either side bows, cross-bows, javelins, and military missiles of every kind, with the greater advantage that the Greeks, trusting to their artificial fire, had omitted arming themselves with other weapons; so that when the valiant crusader bore down on them with so much fury, repaying the terrors of their fire with a storm of bolts and arrows no less formidable, they began to feel that their own advantage was much less than they had supposed, and that, like most other dangers, the maritime fire of the Greeks, when undauntedly confronted, lost at least one-half of its terrors. The Grecian sailors, too, when they observed the vessels approach so near, filled with the steel-clad Latins, began to shrink from a contest to be maintained hand-to-hand with so terrible an enemy.

By degrees, smoke began to issue from the sides of the great Grecian argosy, and the voice of Tancred announced to his soldiers that the Grecian admiral's vessel had taken fire, owing to negligence in the management of the means of destruction she possessed, and that all they had now to do was to maintain such a distance as to avoid sharing her fate. Sparkles and flashes of flame were next seen leaping from place to place on board of the great hulk, as if the element had had the sense and purpose of spreading wider the consternation, and disabling the few who still paid attention to the commands of their admiral and endeavored to extinguish the fire. The consciousness of the combustible nature of the freight began to add despair to terror; from the boltsprit, the rigging, the yards, the sides, and every

part of the vessel, the unfortunate crew were seen dropping themselves, to exchange for the most part a watery death for one by the more dreadful agency of fire. The crew of Tancred's bark, ceasing, by that generous prince's commands, to offer any additional annoyance to an enemy who was at once threatened by the perils of the ocean and of conflagration, ran their vessel ashore in a smooth part of the bay, and, jumping into the shallow sea, made the land without difficulty, many of their steeds being, by the exertions of the owners and the docility of the animals, brought ashore at the same time with their masters. Their commander lost no time in forming their serried ranks into a phalanx of lancers, few indeed at first, but perpetually increasing as ship after ship of the little flotilla ran ashore, or, having more deliberately moored their barks, landed their men and joined their companions.

The cloud which had been raised by the conflict was now driven to leeward before the wind, and the strait exhibited only the relics of the combat. Here tossed upon the billows the scattered and broken remains of one or two of the Latin vessels which had been burned at the commencement of the combat, though their crews, by the exertions of their comrades, had in general been saved. Lower down were seen the remaining five vessels of the Lemnos squadron, holding a disorderly and difficult retreat, with the purpose of gaining the harbor of Constantinople. In the place so late the scene of combat lay moored the hulk of the Grecian admiral, burned to the water's edge, and still sending forth a black smoke from its scathed beams and planks. The flotilla of Tancred, busied in discharging its troops, lay irregularly scattered along the bay, the men making ashore as they could, and taking their course to join the standard of their leader. Various black substances floated on the surface of the water, nearer or more distant to the shore; some proved to be the wreck of the vessels which had been destroyed, and others, more ominous still, the lifeless bodies of mariners who had fallen in the conflict.

The standard had been borne ashore by the Prince's favorite page, Ernest of Apulia, so soon as the keel of Tancred's galley had grazed upon the sand. It was then pitched on the top of that elevated cape between Constantinople and the lists where Lascaris, Demetrius, and other gossips had held their station at the commencement of the engagement, but from which all had fled, between the mingled dread of the Greek fire and the missiles of the Latin crusaders.

CHAPTER XXX

SHEATHED in complete armor, and supporting with his right hand the standard of his fathers, Tancred remained with his handful of warriors like so many statues of steel, expecting some sort of attack from the Grecian party which had occupied the lists, or from the numbers whom the city gates began now to pour forth—soldiers some of them, and others citizens, many of whom were arrayed as if for conflict. These persons, alarmed by the various accounts which were given of the combatants and the progress of the fight, rushed towards the standard of Prince Tancred, with the intention of beating it to the earth, and dispersing the guards who owed it homage and defense. But if the reader shall have happened to have ridden at any time through a pastoral country, with a dog of a noble race following him, he must have remarked, in the deference ultimately paid to the high-bred animal by the shepherd's cur as he crosses the lonely glen, of which the latter conceives himself the lord and guardian, something very similar to the demeanor of the incensed Greeks when they approached near to the little band of Franks. At the first symptom of the intrusion of a stranger, the dog of the shepherd starts from his slumbers, and rushes towards the noble intruder with a clamorous declaration of war; but when the diminution of distance between them shows to the aggressor the size and strength of his opponent, he becomes like a cruiser who, in a chase, has, to his surprise and alarm, found two tier of guns opposed to him instead of one. He halts, suspends his clamorous yelping, and, in fine, ingloriously retreats to his master, with all the dishonorable marks of positively declining the combat. It was in this manner that the troops of the noisy Greeks, with much hallooing and many a boastful shout, hastened both from the town and from the lists, with the apparent intention of sweeping from the field the few companions of Tancred. As they advanced, however, within the power of remarking the calm and regular order of those men who had landed and arranged themselves under this noble chieftain's banner, their minds were altogether changed as to the resolution of instant combat; their advance be-

came an uncertain and staggering gait; their heads were more frequently turned back to the point from which they came than towards the enemy; and their desire to provoke an instant scuffle vanished totally when there did not appear the least symptom that their opponents cared about the matter.

It added to the extreme confidence with which the Latins kept their ground, that they were receiving frequent, though small, reinforcements from their comrades, who were landing by detachments all along the beach; and that, in the course of a short hour, their amount had been raised, on horseback and foot, to a number, allowing for a few casualties, not much less than that which set sail from Scutari.

Another reason why the Latins remained unassailed was certainly the indisposition of the two principal armed parties on shore to enter into a quarrel with them. The guards of every kind who were faithful to the Emperor, and more especially the Varangians, had their orders to remain firm at their posts, some in the lists and others at various places of rendezvous in Constantinople, where their presence was necessary to prevent the effects of the sudden insurrection which Alexius knew to be meditated against him. These, therefore, made no hostile demonstration towards the band of Latins, nor was it the purpose of the Emperor they should do so.

On the other hand, the greater part of the Immortal Guards, and those citizens who were prepared to play a part in the conspiracy, had been impressed by the agents of the deceased Agelastes with the opinion that this band of Latins, commanded by Tancred, the relative of Bohemond, had been despatched by the latter to their assistance. These men, therefore, stood still, and made no attempt to guide or direct the popular efforts of such as inclined to attack these unexpected visitors; in which purpose, therefore, no very great party were united, while the majority were willing enough to find an apology for remaining quiet.

In the mean time, the Emperor, from his Palace of Blacquernal, observed what passed upon the straits, and beheld his navy from Lemnos totally foiled in their attempt, by means of the Greek fire, to check the intended passage of Tancred and his men. He had no sooner seen the leading ship of this squadron begin to beacon the darkness with its own fire than the Emperor formed a secret resolution to disown the unfortunate admiral, and make peace with the

Latins, if that should be absolutely necessary, by sending them his head. He had hardly, therefore, seen the flames burst forth, and the rest of the vessels retreat from their moorings, than in his own mind the doom of the unfortunate Phraortes, for such was the name of the admiral, was signed and sealed.

Achilles Tatius, at the same instant, determining to keep a close eye upon the Emperor at this important crisis, came precipitately into the palace with an appearance of great alarm.

"My lord—my imperial lord, I am unhappy to be the messenger of such unlucky news; but the Latins have in great numbers succeeded in crossing the strait from Scutari. The Lemnos squadron endeavored to stop them, as was last night determined upon in the imperial council of war. By a heavy discharge of the Greek fire one or two of the crusaders' vessels were consumed, but by far the greater number of them pushed on their course, burned the leading ship of the unfortunate Phraortes, and it is strongly reported he has himself perished, with almost all his men. The rest have cut their cables and abandoned the defense of the passage of the Hellespont."

"And you, Achilles Tatius," said the Emperor, "with what purpose is it that you now bring me this melancholy news, at a period so late when I cannot amend the consequences?"

"Under favor, most gracious Emperor," replied the conspirator, not without coloring and stammering, "such was not my intention; I had hoped to submit a plan by which I might easily have prepared the way for correcting this little error."

"Well, your plan, sir?" said the Emperor, drily.

"With your Sacred Majesty's leave," said the Acolyte, "I would myself have undertaken instantly to lead against this Tancred and his Italians the battle-axes of the faithful Varangian Guard, who will make no more account of the small number of Franks who have come ashore than the farmer holds of the hordes of rats and mice, and such-like mischievous vermin, who have harbored in his granaries."

"And what mean you," said the Emperor, "that I am to do, while my Anglo-Saxons fight for my sake?"

"Your Majesty," replied Achilles, not exactly satisfied with the dry and caustic manner in which the Emperor addressed him, "may put yourself at the head of the Immortal cohorts of Constantinople; and I am your security, that

you may either perfect the victory over the Latins, or at least redeem the most distant chance of a defeat, by advancing at the head of this choice body of domestic troops, should the day appear doubtful."

"You yourself, Achilles Tatius," returned the Emperor, "have repeatedly assured us that these Immortals retain a perverse attachment to our rebel Ursel. How is it, then, you would have us entrust our defense to these bands, when we have engaged our valiant Varangians in the proposed conflict with the flower of the Western army? Did you think of this risk, sir Follower?"

Achilles Tatius, much alarmed at an intimation indicative of his purpose being known, answered, "that in his haste he had been more anxious to recommend the plan which should expose his own person to the greater danger than that perhaps which was most attended with personal safety to his imperial master."

"I thank you for so doing," said the Emperor; "you have anticipated my wishes, though it is not in my power at present to follow the advice you have given me. I would have been well contented, undoubtedly, had these Latins measured their way over the strait again, as suggested by last night's council; but since they have arrived, and stand embattled on our shores, it is better that we pay them with money and with spoil than with the lives of our gallant subjects. We cannot, after all, believe that they come with any serious intention of doing us injury; it is but the insane desire of witnessing feats of battle and single combat, which is to them the breath of their nostrils, that can have impelled them to this partial counter-march. I impose upon you, Achilles Tatius, combining the Protospathaire in the same commission with you, the duty of riding up to yonder standard, and learning of their chief, called the Prince Tancred, if he is there in person, the purpose of his return, and the cause of his entering into debate with Phraortes and the Lemnos squadron. If they send us any reasonable excuse, we shall not be averse to receive it at their hands; for we have not made so many sacrifices for the preservation of peace, to break forth into war, if, after all, so great an evil can be avoided. Thou wilt receive, therefore, with a candid and complacent mind, such apologies as they may incline to bring forward; and be assured that the sight of this puppet-show of a single combat will be enough of itself to banish every other consideration from the reflection of these giddy crusaders."

A knock was at this moment heard at the door of the Emperor's apartment; and upon the word being given to enter, the Protospathaire made his appearance. He was arrayed in a splendid suit of ancient Roman-fashioned armor. The want of a visor left his countenance entirely visible, which, pale and anxious as it was, did not well become the martial crest and dancing plume with which it was decorated. He received the commission already mentioned with the less alacrity because the Acolyte was added to him as his colleague; for, as the reader may have observed, these two officers were of separate factions in the army, and on indifferent terms with each other. Neither did the Acolyte consider his being united in commission with the Protospathaire as a mark either of the Emperor's confidence or of his own safety. He was, however, in the mean time in the Blacquernal, where the slaves of the interior made not the least hesitation, when ordered, to execute any officer of the court. The two generals had, therefore, no other alternative than that which is allowed to two greyhounds who are reluctantly coupled together. The hope of Achilles Tatius was, that he might get safely through his mission to Tancred, after which he thought the successful explosion of the conspiracy might take place and have its course, either as a matter desired and countenanced by those Latins, or passed over as a thing in which they took no interest on either side.

By the parting order of the Emperor, they were to mount on horseback at the sounding of the great Varangian trumpet, put themselves at the head of those Anglo-Saxon guards in the courtyard of their barrack, and await the Emperor's further orders.

There was something in this arrangement which pressed hard on the conscience of Achilles Tatius, yet he was at a loss to justify his apprehensions to himself, unless from a conscious feeling of his own guilt. He felt, however, that in being detained, under pretense of an honorable mission, at the head of the Varangians, he was deprived of the liberty of disposing of himself, by which he had hoped to communicate with the Cæsar and Hereward, whom he reckoned upon as his active accomplices, not knowing that the first was at this moment a prisoner in the Blacquernal, where Alexius had arrested him in the apartments of the Empress, and that the second was the most important support of Comnenus during the whole of that eventful day.

When the gigantic trumpet of the Varangian Guards sent forth its deep signal through the city, the Protospathaire

hurried Achilles along with him to the rendezvous of the Varangians, and on the way said to him, in an easy and indifferent tone, "As the Emperor is in the field in person, you, his representative, or Follower, will, of course, transmit no orders to the bodyguard, except such as shall receive their origin from himself, so that you will consider your authority as this day suspended."

"I regret," said Achilles, "that there should have seemed any cause for such precautions; I had hoped my own truth and fidelity—but I am obsequious to his imperial pleasure in all things."

"Such are his orders," said the other officer, "and you knew under what penalty obedience is enforced."

"If I did not," said Achilles, "the composition of this body of guards would remind me, since it comprehends not only great part of those Varangians who are the immediate defenders of the Emperor's throne, but those slaves of the interior who are the executioners of his pleasure."

To this the Protospathaire returned no answer, while the more closely the Acolyte looked upon the guard which attended, to the unusual number of nearly three thousand men, the more had he reason to believe that he might esteem himself fortunate if, by the intervention of either the Cæsar, Agelastes, or Hereward, he could pass to the conspirators a signal to suspend the intended explosion, which seemed to be provided against by the Emperor with unusual caution. He would have given the full dream of empire, with which he had been for a short time lulled asleep, to have seen but a glimpse of the azure plume of Nicephorus, the white mantle of the philosopher, or even a glimmer of Hereward's battle-ax. No such objects could be seen anywhere, and not a little was the faithless Follower displeased to see that, whichever way he turned his eyes, those of the Protospathaire, but especially of the trusty domestic officers of the empire, seemed to follow and watch their occupation.

Amidst the numerous soldiers whom he saw on all sides, his eye did not recognize a single man with whom he could exchange a friendly or confidential glance, and he stood in all that agony of terror which is rendered the more discomfiting because the traitor is conscious that, beset by various foes, his own fears are the most likely of all to betray him. Internally, as the danger seemed to increase, and as his alarmed imagination attempted to discern new reasons for it, he could only conclude that either one of the three principal conspirators, or at least some of the inferiors, had turned

informers; and his doubt was, whether he should not screen his own share of what had been premeditated by flinging himself at the feet of the Emperor, and making a full confession. But still the fear of being premature in having recourse to such a base means of saving himself, joined to the absence of the Emperor, united to keep within his lips a secret which concerned not only all his future fortunes, but life itself. He was in the mean time, therefore, plunged as it were in a sea of trouble and uncertainty, while the specks of land, which seemed to promise him refuge, were distant, dimly seen, and extremely difficult of attainment.

CHAPTER XXXI

To-morrow—oh, that's sudden. Spare him—spare him;
He's not prepared to die.

SHAKSPEARE.

AT the moment when Achilles Tatius, with a feeling of much insecurity, awaited the unwinding of the perilous skein of state politics, a private counsel of the imperial family was held in the hall termed the temple of the Muses, repeatedly distinguished as the apartment in which the Princess Anna Comnena was wont to make her evening recitations to those who were permitted the honor of hearing prelections of her history. The council consisted of the Empress Irene, the Princess herself and the Emperor, with the Patriarch of the Greek Church, as a sort of mediator between a course of severity and a dangerous degree of lenity.

"Tell not me, Irene," said the Emperor, "of the fine things attached to the praise of mercy. Here have I sacrificed my just revenge over my rival Ursel, and what good do I obtain by it? Why, the old obstinate man, instead of being tractable, and sensible of the generosity which has spared his life and eyes, can be with difficulty brought to exert himself in favor of the prince to whom he owes them. I used to think that eyesight and the breath of life were things which one would preserve at any sacrifice; but, on the contrary, I now believe men value them like mere toys. Talk not to me, therefore, of the gratitude to be excited by saving this ungrateful cub; and believe me, girl," turning to Anna, "that not only will all my subjects, should I follow your advice, laugh at me for sparing a man so predetermined to work my ruin, but even thou thyself wilt be the first to upbraid me with the foolish kindness thou art now so anxious to extort from me."

"Your imperial pleasure, then," said the Patriarch, "is fixed that your unfortunate son-in-law shall suffer death for his accession to this conspiracy, deluded by that heathen villain Agelastes and the traitorous Achilles Tatius?"

"Such is my purpose," said the Emperor; "and in evidence that I mean not again to pass over a sentence of

this kind with a seeming execution only, as in the case of Ursel, this ungrateful traitor of ours shall be led from the top of the staircase, or Ladder of Acheron, as it is called, through the large chamber named the Hall of Judgment, at the upper end of which are arranged the apparatus for execution, by which I swear——"

"Swear not at all!" said the Patriarch. "I forbid thee, in the name of that Heaven whose voice speaks in my person —though unworthy—to quench the smoking flax, or destroy the slight hope which there may remain that you may finally be persuaded to alter your purpose respecting your misguided son-in-law, within the space allotted to him to sue for your mercy. Remember, I pray you, the remorse of Constantine."

"What means your reverence?" said Irene.

"A trifle," replied the Emperor, "not worthy being quoted from such a mouth as the Patriarch's, being, as it probably is, a relic of paganism."

"What is it?" exclaimed the females anxiously, in the hope of hearing something which might strengthen their side of the argument, and something moved, perhaps, by curiosity, a motive which seldom slumbers in a female bosom, even when the stronger passions are in arms.

"The Patriarch will tell you," answered Alexius, "since you must needs know; though, I promise you, you will not receive any assistance in your argument from a silly legendary tale."

"Hear it, however," said the Patriarch; "for, though it is a tale of the olden time, and sometimes supposed to refer to the period when heathenism predominated, it is no less true that it was a vow made and registered in the chancery of the rightful Deity by an emperor of Greece.

"What I am now to relate to you," continued he, "is, in truth, a tale not only of a Christian emperor, but of him who made the whole empire Christian; and of that very Constantine who was also the first who declared Constantinople to be the metropolis of the empire. This hero, remarkable alike for his zeal for religion and for his warlike achievements, was crowned by Heaven with repeated victory, and with all manner of blessings, save that unity in his family which wise men are most ambitious to possess. Not only was the blessing of concord among brethren denied to the family of this triumphant emperor, but a deserving son of mature age, who had been supposed to aspire to share the throne with his father, was suddenly, and at midnight, called

upon to enter his defense against a capital charge of treason. You will readily excuse my referring to the arts by which the son was rendered guilty in the eyes of the father. Be it enough to say, that the unfortunate young man fell a victim to the guilt of his stepmother, Fausta, and that he disdained to exculpate himself from a charge so gross and so erroneous. It is said that the anger of the Emperor was kept up against his son by the sycophants who called upon Constantine to observe that the culprit disdained even to supplicate for mercy or vindicate his innocence from so foul a charge.

"But the death-blow had no sooner struck the innocent youth than his father obtained proof of the rashness with which he had acted. He had at this period been engaged in constructing the subterranean parts of the Blacquernal Palace, which his remorse appointed to contain a record of his paternal grief and contrition. At the upper part of the staircase, called the Pit of Acheron, he caused to be constructed a large chamber, still called the Hall of Judgment, for the purpose of execution. A passage through an archway in the upper wall leads from the hall to the place of misery, where the ax, or other engine, is disposed for the execution of state prisoners of consequence. Over this archway was placed a species of marble altar, surmounted by an image of the unfortunate Crispus; the materials were gold, and it bore the memorable inscription, TO MY SON, WHOM I RASHLY CONDEMNED, AND TOO HASTILY EXECUTED. When constructing this passage, Constantine made a vow that he himself and his posterity, being reigning emperors, would stand beside the statue of Crispus at the time when any individual of their family should be led to execution, and, before they suffered him to pass from the Hall of Judgment to the chamber of death, that they should themselves be personally convinced of the truth of the charge under which he suffered.

"Time rolled on; the memory of Constantine was remembered almost like that of a saint, and the respect paid to it threw into shadow the anecdote of his son's death. The exigencies of the state rendered it difficult to keep so large a sum in specie invested in a statue, which called to mind the unpleasant failings of so great a man. Your Imperial Highness's predecessors applied the metal which formed the statue to support the Turkish wars; and the remorse and penance of Constantine died away in an obscure tradition of the church or of the palace. Still, however, unless your Imperial Majesty has strong reasons to the contrary, I

should give it as my opinion that you will hardly achieve what is due to the memory of the greatest of your predecessors unless you give this unfortunate criminal, being so near a relation of your own, an opportunity of pleading his cause before passing by the altar of refuge, being the name which is commonly given to the monument of the unfortunate Crispus, son of Constantine, although now deprived both of the golden letters which composed the inscription and the golden image which represented the royal sufferer."

A mournful strain of music was now heard to ascend the stair so often mentioned.

"If I must hear the Cæsar Nicephorus Briennius ere he pass the altar of refuge, there must be no loss of time," said the Emperor; "for these melancholy sounds announce that he has already approached the Hall of Judgment."

Both the imperial ladies began instantly, with the utmost earnestness, to deprecate the execution of the Cæsar's doom, and to conjure Alexius, as he hoped for quiet in his house hold, and the everlasting gratitude of his wife and daughter, that he would listen to their entreaties in behalf of an unfortunate man, who had been seduced into guilt, but not from his heart.

"I will at least see him," said the Emperor, "and the holy vow of Constantine shall be in the present instance strictly observed. But remember, you foolish women, that the state of Crispus and the present Cæsar is as different as guilt from innocence, and that their fates, therefore, may be justly decided upon opposite principles and with opposite results. But I will confront this criminal; and you, Patriarch, may be present to render what help is in your power to a dying man; for you, the wife and mother of the traitor, you will, methinks, do well to retire to the church, and pray God for the soul of the deceased, rather than disturb his last moments with unavailing lamentations."

"Alexius," said the Empress Irene, "I beseech you to be contented; be assured that we will not leave you in this dogged humor of blood-shedding, lest you make such materials for history as are fitter for the time of Nero than of Constantine."

The Emperor, without reply, led the way into the Hall of Judgment, where a much stronger light than usual was already shining up the stair of Acheron, from which were heard to sound, by sullen and intermitted fits, the penitential psalms which the Greek Church has appointed to be sung at executions. Twenty mute slaves, the pale color of

whose turbans gave a ghastly look to the withered cast of their features and the glaring whiteness of their eyeballs, ascended two by two, as it were from the bowels of the earth, each of them bearing in one hand a naked saber and in the other a lighted torch. After these came the unfortunate Nicephorus; his looks were those of man half-dead from the terror of immediate dissolution, and what he possessed of remaining attention was turned successively to two black-stoled monks, who were anxiously repeating religious passages to him alternately from the Greek Scripture and the form of devotion adopted by the court of Constantinople. The Cæsar's dress also corresponded to his mournful fortunes: his legs and arms were bare, and a simple white tunic, the neck of which was already open, showed that he had assumed the garments which were to serve his last turn. A tall muscular Nubian slave, who considered himself obviously as the principal person in the procession, bore on his shoulder a large heavy headsman's ax, and, like a demon waiting on a sorcerer, stalked step for step after his victim. The rear of the procession was closed by a band of four priests, each of whom chanted from time to time the devotional psalm which was thundered forth on the occasion; and another of slaves, armed with bows and quivers, and with lances, to resist any attempt at rescue, if such should be offered.

It would have required a harder heart than that of the unlucky princess to have resisted this gloomy apparatus of fear and sorrow, surrounding, at the same time directed against, a beloved object, the lover of her youth, and the husband of her bosom, within a few minutes of the termination of his mortal career.

As the mournful train approached towards the altar of refuge, half-encircled as it now was by the two great and expanded arms which projected from the wall, the Emperor, who stood directly in the passage, threw upon the flame of the altar some chips of aromatic wood, steeped in spirit of wine, which, leaping at once into a blaze, illuminated the doleful procession, the figure of the principal culprit, and the slaves, who had most of them extinguished their flambeaux so soon as they had served the purpose of lighting them up the staircase.

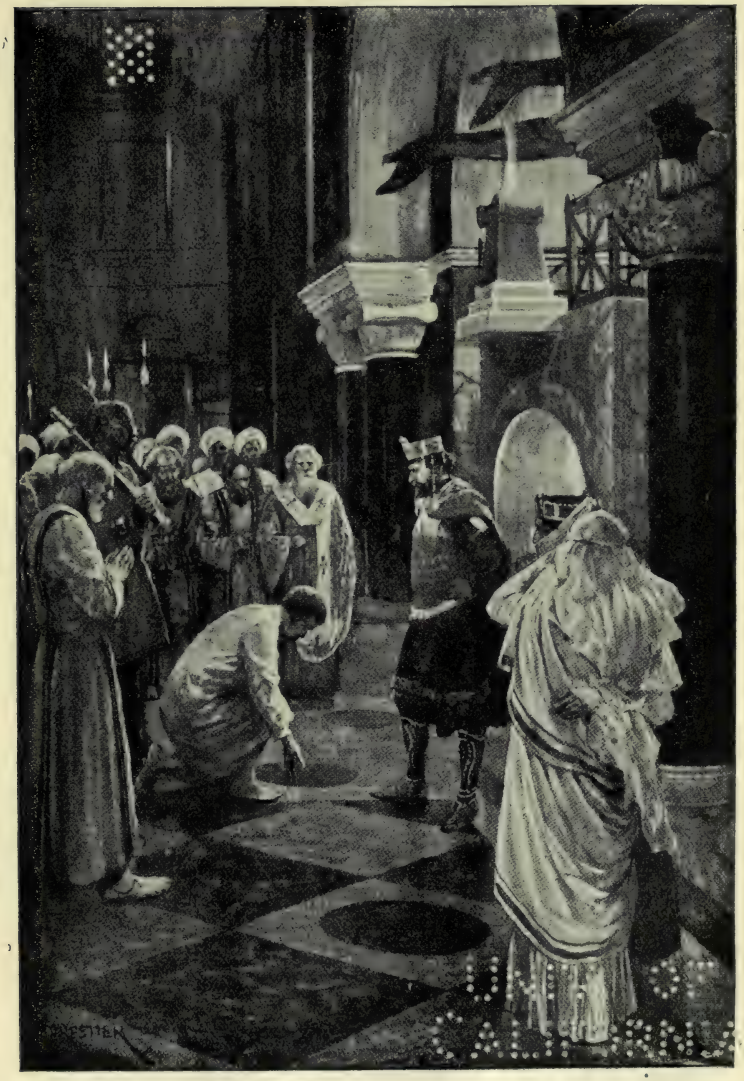
The sudden light spread from the altar failed not to make the Emperor and the Princesses visible to the mournful group which approached through the hall. All halted—all were silent. It was a meeting, as the Princess has expressed

herself in her historical work, such as took place betwixt Ulysses and the inhabitants of the other world, who, when they tasted of the blood of his sacrifices, recognized him indeed, but with empty lamentations, and gestures feeble and shadowy. The hymn of contrition sunk also into silence; and of the whole group, the only figure rendered more distinct was the gigantic executioner, whose high and furrowed forehead, as well as the broad steel of his ax, caught and reflected back the bright gleam from the altar. Alexius saw the necessity of breaking the silence which ensued, lest it should give the intercessors for the prisoner an opportunity of renewing their entreaties.

"Nicephorus Briennius," he said, with a voice which, although generally interrupted by a slight hesitation, which procured him, among his enemies, the nickname of the Stutterer, yet, upon important occasions like the present, was so judiciously tuned and balanced in its sentences that no such defect was at all visible—"Nicephorus Briennius," he said, "late Cæsar, the lawful doom hath been spoken, that, having conspired against the life of thy rightful sovereign and affectionate father, Alexius Comnenus, thou shalt suffer the appropriate sentence, by having thy head struck from thy body. Here, therefore, at the last altar of refuge, I meet thee, according to the vow of the immortal Constantine, for the purpose of demanding whether thou hast anything to allege why this doom should not be executed? Even at this eleventh hour thy tongue is unloosed to speak with freedom what may concern thy life. All is prepared in this world and in the next. Look forward beyond yon archway—the block is fixed. Look behind thee, thou see'st the ax already sharpened. Thy place for good or evil in the next world is already determined; time flies—eternity approaches. If thou hast aught to say, speak it freely; if nought, confess the justice of thy sentence, and pass on to death."

The Emperor commenced this oration with those looks described by his daughter as so piercing that they dazzled like lightning, and his periods, if not precisely flowing like burning lava, were yet the accents of a man having the power of absolute command, and as such produced an effect not only on the criminal, but also upon the Prince himself, whose watery eyes and faltering voice acknowledged his sense and feeling of the fatal import of the present moment.

Rousing himself to the conclusion of what he had commenced, the Emperor again demanded whether the prisoner had anything to say in his own defense.



"'I have been tempted,' he said, dropping on his knees, 'and I have fallen.'"

Nicephorus was not one of those hardened criminals who may be termed the very prodigies of history, from the coolness with which they contemplate the consummation of their crimes, whether in their own punishment or the misfortunes of others. "I have been tempted," he said, dropping to his knees, "and I have fallen. I have nothing to allege in excuse of my folly and ingratitude; but I stand prepared to die to expiate my guilt." A deep sigh, almost amounting to a scream, was here heard, close behind the Emperor, and its cause assigned by the sudden exclamation of Irene—"My lord—my lord, your daughter is gone!" And in fact Anna Comnena had sunk into her mother's arms without either sense or motion. The father's attention was instantly called to support his swooning child, while the unhappy husband strove with the guards to be permitted to go to the assistance of his wife. "Give me but five minutes of that time which the law has abridged; let my efforts but assist in recalling her to a life which should be as long as her virtues and her talents deserve; and then let me die at her feet, for I care not to go an inch beyond."

The Emperor, who in fact had been more astonished at the boldness and rashness of Nicephorus than alarmed by his power, considered him as a man rather misled than misleading others, and felt, therefore, the full effect of this last interview. He was, besides, not naturally cruel, where severities were to be enforced under his own eye.

"The divine and immortal Constantine," he said, "did not, I am persuaded, subject his descendants to this severe trial in order to further search out the innocence of the criminals, but rather to give to those who came after him an opportunity of generously forgiving a crime which could not without pardon—the express pardon of the prince—escape without punishment. I rejoice that I am born of the willow rather than of the oak, and I acknowledge my weakness, that not even the safety of my own life, or resentment of this unhappy man's treasonable machinations, have the same effect with me as the tears of my wife and the swooning of my daughter. Rise up, Nicephorus Briennius, freely pardoned, and restored even to the rank of Cæsar. We will direct thy pardon to be made out by the great Logothete, and sealed with the golden bull. For four-and-twenty hours thou art a prisoner, until an arrangement is made for preserving the public peace. Meanwhile thou wilt remain under the charge of the Patriarch, who will be answerable for thy forthcoming. Daughter and wife, you must now go

hence to your own apartment; a future time will come, during which you may have enough of weeping and embracing, mourning and rejoicing. Pray Heaven that I, who, having been trained on till I have sacrificed justice and true policy to uxorious compassion and paternal tenderness of heart, may not have cause at last for grieving in good earnest for all the events of this miscellaneous drama."

The pardoned Cæsar, who endeavored to regulate his ideas according to this unexpected change, found it as difficult to reconcile himself to the reality of his situation as Ursel to the face of nature, after having been long deprived of enjoying it; so much do the dizziness and confusion of ideas occasioned by moral and physical causes of surprise and terror resemble each other in their effects on the understanding.

At length he stammered forth a request that he might be permitted to go to the field with the Emperor, and divert, by the interposition of his own body, the traitorous blows which some desperate man might aim against that of his own prince, in a day which was too likely to be one of danger and bloodshed.

"Hold there!" said Alexius Comnenus. "We will not begin thy newly-redeemed life by renewed doubts of thine allegiance; yet it is but fitting to remind thee that thou art still the nominal and ostensible head of those who expect to take a part in this day's insurrection, and it will be the safest course to trust its pacification to others than to thee. Go, sir, compare notes with the Patriarch, and merit your pardon by confessing to him any traitorous intentions concerning this foul conspiracy with which we may be as yet unacquainted. Daughter and wife, farewell! I must now depart for the lists, where I have to speak with the traitor Achilles Tatius and the heathenish infidel Agelastes, if he still lives, but of whose providential death I hear a confirmed rumor."

"Yet do not go, my dearest father," said the Princess; "but let me rather go to encourage the loyal subjects in your behalf. The extreme kindness which you have extended towards my guilty husband convinces me of the extent of your affection towards your unworthy daughter, and the greatness of the sacrifice which you have made to her almost childish affection for an ungrateful man who put your life in danger."

"That is to say, daughter," said the Emperor, smiling, "that the pardon of your husband is a boon which has lost

its merit when it is granted? Take my advice, Anna, and think otherwise: wives and their husbands ought in prudence to forget their offenses towards each other as soon as human nature will permit them. Life is too short, and conjugal tranquillity too uncertain to admit of dwelling long upon such irritating subjects. To your apartments, Princesses, and prepare the scarlet buskins and the embroidery which is displayed on the cuffs and the collars of the Cæsar's robe, indicative of his high rank. He must not be seen without them on the morrow. Reverend father, I remind you once more that the Cæsar is in your personal custody from this moment until to-morrow at the same hour."

They parted; the Emperor repairing to put himself at the head of his Varangian Guards; the Cæsar, under the superintendence of the Patriarch, withdrawing into the interior of the Blacquernal Palace, where Nicephorus Briennius was under the necessity of "unthreading the rude eye of rebellion," and throwing such lights as were in his power upon the progress of the conspiracy.

"Agelastes," he said "Achilles Tatius, and Hereward the Varangian were the persons principally entrusted in its progress. But whether they had been all true to their engagements he did not pretend to be assured."

In the female apartments there was a violent discussion betwixt Anna Comnena and her mother. The Princess had undergone during the day many changes of sentiment and feeling; and though they had finally united themselves into one strong interest in her husband's favor, yet no sooner was the fear of his punishment removed than the sense of his ungrateful behavior began to revive. She became sensible also that a woman of her extraordinary attainments, who had been by a universal course of flattery disposed to entertain a very high opinion of her own consequence, made rather a poor figure when she had been the passive subject of a long series of intrigues, by which she was destined to be disposed of in one way or the other, according to the humor of a set of subordinate conspirators, who never so much as dreamed of regarding her as a being capable of forming a wish in her own behalf, or even yielding or refusing a consent. Her father's authority over her, and right to dispose of her, was less questionable; but even then it was something derogatory to the dignity of a princess born in the purple—an authoress besides, and giver of immortality—to be, without her own consent, thrown, as it were, at the head now of one suitor, now of another, how-

ever mean or disgusting, whose alliance could for the time benefit the Emperor. The consequence of these moody reflections was, that Anna Comnena deeply toiled in spirit for the discovery of some means by which she might assert her sullied dignity, and various were the expedients which she revolved.

CHAPTER XXXII

But now the hand of fate is on the curtain,
And brings the scene to light.

Don Sebastian.

THE gigantic trumpet of the Varangians sounded its loudest note of march, and the squadrons of the faithful guards, sheathed in complete mail, and inclosing in their center the person of their imperial master, set forth upon their procession through the streets of Constantinople. The form of Alexius, glittering in his splendid armor, seemed no unmeet central point for the force of an empire; and while the citizens crowded in the train of him and his escort, there might be seen a visible difference between those who came with the premeditated intention of tumult and the greater part, who, like the multitude of every great city, thrust each other and shout for rapture on account of any cause for which a crowd may be collected together. The hope of the conspirators was lodged chiefly in the Immortal Guards, who were levied principally for the defense of Constantinople, partook of the general prejudices of the citizens, and had been particularly influenced by those in favor of Ursel, by whom, previous to his imprisonment, they had themselves been commanded. The conspirators had determined that those of this body who were considered as most discontented should early in the morning take possession of the posts in the lists most favorable for their purpose of assaulting the Emperor's person. But, in spite of all efforts short of actual violence, for which the time did not seem to be come, they found themselves disappointed in this purpose by parties of the Varangian Guards, planted with apparent carelessness, but, in fact, with perfect skill, for the prevention of their enterprise. Somewhat confounded at perceiving that a design which they could not suppose to be suspected was, nevertheless, on every part controlled and counter-checked, the conspirators began to look for the principal persons of their own party, on whom they depended for orders in this emergency; but neither the Cæsar nor Agelastes was

to be seen, whether in the lists or on the military march from Constantinople; and though Achilles Tatius rode in the latter assembly, yet it might be clearly observed that he was rather attending upon the Protospathaire than assuming that independence as an officer which he loved to effect.

In this manner, as the Emperor with his glittering bands approached the phalanx of Tancred and his followers, who were drawn up, it will be remembered, upon a rising cape between the city and the lists, the main body of the imperial procession deflected in some degree from the straight road in order to march past them without interruption; while the Protospathaire and the Acolyte passed, under the escort of a band of Varangians, to bear the Emperor's inquiries to Prince Tancred concerning the purpose of his being there with his band. The short march was soon performed; the large trumpet which attended the two officers sounded a parley, and Tancred himself, remarkable for that personal beauty which Tasso has preferred to any of the crusaders, except Rinaldo d'Este, the creature of his own poetical imagination, advanced to parley with them.

"The Emperor of Greece," said the Protospathaire to Tancred, "requires the Prince of Otranto to show, by the two high officers who shall deliver him this message, with what purpose he has returned, contrary to his oath, to the right side of these straits; assuring Prince Tancred, at the same time, that nothing will so much please the Emperor as to receive an answer not at variance with his treaty with the Duke of Bouillon, and the oath which was taken by the crusading nobles and their soldiers; since that would enable the Emperor, in conformity to his own wishes, by his kind reception of Prince Tancred and his troop, to show how high is his estimation of the dignity of the one and the bravery of both. We wait an answer."

The tone of the message had nothing in it very alarming, and its substance cost Prince Tancred very little trouble to answer. "The cause," he said, "of the Prince of Otranto appearing here with fifty lances is this cartel, in which a combat is appointed betwixt Nicephorus Briennius, called the Cæsar, a high member of this empire, and a worthy knight of great fame, the partner of the pilgrims who have taken the cross, in their high vow to rescue Palestine from the infidels. The name of the said knight is the redoubted Robert of Paris. It becomes, therefore, an obligation, indispensable upon the holy pilgrims of the crusade, to send

one chief of their number, with a body of men-at-arms, sufficient to see, as is usual, fair play between the combatants. That such is their intention may be seen from their sending no more than fifty lances, with their furniture and following; whereas it would have cost them no trouble to have detached ten times the number, had they nourished any purpose of interfering by force, or disturbing the fair combat which is about to take place. The Prince of Otranto, therefore, and his followers, will place themselves at the disposal of the imperial court, and witness the proceedings of the combat, with the most perfect confidence that the rules of fair battle will be punctually observed."

The two Grecian officers transmitted this reply to the Emperor, who heard it with pleasure, and, immediately proceeding to act upon the principle which he had laid down, of maintaining peace, if possible, with the crusaders, named Prince Tancred with the Protospathaire as field-marshals of the lists, fully empowered, under the Emperor, to decide all the terms of the combat, and to have recourse to Alexius himself where their opinions disagreed. This was made known to the assistants, who were thus prepared for the entry into the lists of the Grecian officer and the Italian prince in full armor, while a proclamation announced to all the spectators their solemn office. The same annunciation commanded the assistants of every kind to clear a convenient part of the seats which surrounded the lists on one side, that it might serve for the accommodation of Prince Tancred's followers.

Achilles Tatius, who was a heedful observer of all these passages, saw with alarm that by the last collocation the armed Latins were interposed between the Immortal Guards and the discontented citizens, which made it most probable that the conspiracy was discovered, and that Alexius found he had a good right to reckon upon the assistance of Tancred and his forces in the task of suppressing it. This, added to the cold and caustic manner in which the Emperor, communicated his commands to him, made the Acolyte of opinion that his best chance of escape from the danger in which he was now placed was, that the whole conspiracy should fall to the ground, and that the day should pass without the least attempt to shake the throne of Alexius Comnenus. Even then it continued highly doubtful whether a despot so wily and so suspicious as the Emperor would think it sufficient to rest satisfied with the private knowledge of the undertaking and its failure, with which he appeared to be

possessed, without putting into exercise the bow-strings and the blinding-irons of the mutes of the interior. There was, however, little possibility either of flight or of resistance. The least attempt to withdraw himself from the neighborhood of those faithful followers of the Emperor, personal foes of his own, by whom he was gradually and more closely surrounded, became each moment more perilous, and more certain to provoke a rupture which it was the interest of the weaker party to delay, with whatever difficulty. And while the soldiers under Achilles's immediate authority seemed still to treat him as their superior officer, and appeal to him for the word of command, it became more and more evident that the slightest degree of suspicion which should be excited would be the instant signal for his being placed under arrest. With a trembling heart, therefore, and eyes, dimmed by the powerful idea of soon parting with the light of day and all that it made visible, the Acolyte saw himself condemned to watch the turn of circumstances, over which he could have no influence, and to content himself with waiting the result of a drama, in which his own life was concerned, although the piece was played by others. Indeed, it seemed as if through the whole assembly some signal was waited for, which no one was in readiness to give.

The discontented citizens and soldiers looked in vain for Agelastes and the Cæsar; and when they observed the condition of Achilles Tatius, it seemed such as rather to express doubt and consternation than to give encouragement to the hopes they had entertained. Many of the lower classes, however, felt too secure in their own insignificance to fear the personal consequences of a tumult, and were desirous, therefore, to provoke the disturbance, which seemed hushing itself to sleep.

A hoarse murmur, which attained almost the importance of a shout, exclaimed—"Justice—justice! Ursel—Ursel! The rights of the Immortal Guards!" etc. At this the trumpet of the Varangians awoke, and its tremendous tones were heard to peal loudly over the whole assembly, as the voice of its presiding deity. A dead silence prevailed in the multitude, and the voice of a herald announced, in the name of Alexius Comnenus, his sovereign will and pleasure.

"Citizens of the Roman empire, your complaints, stirred up by factious men, have reached the ear of your Emperor; you shall yourselves be witness to his power of gratifying his people. At your request, and before your own sight, the visual ray which hath been quenched shall be reillumined;

the mind whose efforts were restricted to the imperfect supply of individual wants shall be again extended, if such is the owner's will, to the charge of an ample theme or division of the empire. Political jealousy, more hard to receive conviction than the blind to receive sight, shall yield itself conquered, by the Emperor's paternal love of his people and his desire to give them satisfaction. Ursel, the darling of your wishes, supposed to be long dead, or at least believed to exist in blinded seclusion, is restored to you well in health, clear in eyesight, and possessed of every faculty necessary to adorn the Emperor's favor or merit the affection of the people."

As the herald thus spoke, a figure, which had hitherto stood shrouded behind some officers of the interior, now stepped forth, and flinging from him a dusky veil, in which he was wrapped, appeared in a dazzling scarlet garment, of which the sleeves and buskins displayed those ornaments which expressed a rank nearly adjacent to that of the Emperor himself. He held in his hand a silver truncheon, the badge of delegated command over the Immortal Guards, and, kneeling before the Emperor, presented it to his hands, intimating a virtual resignation of the command which it implied. The whole assembly were electrified at the appearance of a person long supposed either dead or by cruel means rendered incapable of public trust. Some recognized the man whose appearance and features were not easily forgot, and gratulated him upon his most unexpected return to the service of his country. Others stood suspended in amazement, not knowing whether to trust their eyes, while a few determined malcontents eagerly pressed upon the assembly an allegation that the person presented as Ursel was only a counterfeit, and the whole a trick of the Emperor.

"Speak to them, noble Ursel," said the Emperor. "Tell them that, if I have sinned against thee, it has been because I was deceived, and that my disposition to make thee amends is as ample as ever was my purpose of doing thee wrong."

"Friends and countrymen," said Ursel, turning himself to the assembly, "his Imperial Majesty permits me to offer my assurance that, if in any former part of my life I have suffered at his hand, it is more than wiped out by the feelings of a moment so glorious as this; and that I am well satisfied, from the present instant, to spend what remains of my life in the service of the most generous and beneficent of sovereigns, or, with his permission, to bestow it in preparing, by

devotional exercises, for an infinite immortality to be spent in the society of saints and angels. Whichever choice I shall make, I reckon that you, my beloved countrymen, who have remembered me so kindly during years of darkness and captivity, will not fail to afford me the advantage of your prayers."

This sudden apparition of the long-lost Ursel had too much of that which elevates and surprises not to captivate the multitude, and they sealed their reconciliation with three tremendous shouts, which are said so to have shaken the air that birds, incapable of sustaining themselves, sunk down exhausted out of their native element.

CHAPTER XXXIII

"What, leave the combat out!" exclaimed the knight.
"Yea! or we must renounce the Stagyrite."
"So large a crowd the stage will ne'er contain."
"Then build a new, or act it on a plain."

POPE.

THE sounds of the gratulating shout had expanded over the distant shores of the Bosphorus by mountain and forest, and died at length in the farthest echoes, when the people, in the silence which ensued, appeared to ask each other what next scene was about to adorn a pause so solemn and a stage so august. The pause would probably have soon given place to some new clamor, for a multitude, from whatever cause assembled, seldom remains long silent, had not a new signal from the Varangian trumpet given notice of a fresh purpose to solicit their attention. The blast had something in its tone spirit-stirring and yet melancholy, partaking both of the character of a point of war and of the doleful sounds which might be chosen to announce an execution of peculiar solemnity. Its notes were high and widely extended, and prolonged and long dwelt upon it, as if the brazen clamor had been waked by something more tremendous than the lungs of mere mortals.

The multitude appeared to acknowledge these awful sounds, which were indeed such as habitually solicited their attention to imperial edicts of melancholy import, by which rebellions were announced, dooms of treason discharged, and other tidings of a great and affecting import intimated to the people of Constantinople. When the trumpet had in its turn ceased, with its thrilling and doleful notes, to agitate the immense assembly, the voice of the herald again addressed them.

It announced in a grave and affecting strain, that it sometimes chanced how the people failed in their duty to a sovereign, who was unto them as a father, and how it became the painful duty of the prince to use the rod of correction rather than the olive scepter of mercy.

"Fortunate," continued the herald, "it is when the supreme Deity, having taken on Himself the preservation of a

throne in beneficence and justice resembling His own, has also assumed the most painful task of His earthly delegate, by punishing those whom His unerring judgment acknowledges as most guilty, and leaving to His substitute the more agreeable task of pardoning such of those as art has misled, and treachery hath involved in its snares. Such being the case, Greece and its accompanying themes are called upon to listen and learn, that a villain, named Agelastes, who had insinuated himself into the favor of the Emperor, by affectation of deep knowledge and severe virtue, had formed a treacherous plan for the murder of the Emperor Alexius Comnenus, and a revolution in the state. This person, who, under pretended wisdom, hid the doctrines of a heretic and the vices of a sensualist, had found proselytes to his doctrines even among the Emperor's household, and those persons who were most bound to him, and down to the lower order, to excite the last of whom were dispersed a multitude of forged rumors, similar to those concerning Ursel's death and blindness, of which your own eyes have witnessed the falsehood."

The people, who had hitherto listened in silence, upon this appeal broke forth in a clamorous assent. They had scarcely been again silent ere the iron-voiced herald continued his proclamation.

"Not Korah, Dathan, and Abiram," he said, "had more justly, or more directly, fallen under the doom of an offended Deity than this villain Agelastes. The steadfast earth gaped to devour the apostate sons of Israel, but the termination of this wretched man's existence has been, as far as can now be known, by the direct means of an evil spirit, whom his own arts had evoked into the upper air. By the spirit, as would appear by the testimony of a noble lady and other females, who witnessed the termination of his life, Agelastes was strangled, a fate well becoming his odious crimes. Such a death, even of a guilty man, must, indeed, be most painful to the humane feelings of the Emperor, because it involves suffering beyond this world. But the awful catastrophe carries with it this comfort, that it absolves the Emperor from the necessity of carrying any farther a vengeance which Heaven itself seems to have limited to the exemplary punishment of the principal conspirator. Some changes of offices and situations shall be made, for the sake of safety and good order; but the secret who had or who had not been concerned in this awful crime shall sleep in the bosoms of the persons themselves implicated, since the Emperor is

determined to dismiss their offense from his memory, as the effect of a transient delusion. Let all, therefore, who now hear me, whatever consciousness they may possess of a knowledge of what was this day intended, return to their houses, assured that their own thoughts will be their only punishment. Let them rejoice that Almighty goodness has saved them from the meditations of their own hearts, and, according to the affecting language of Scripture, 'Let them repent and sin no more, lest a worse thing befall them.'"

The voice of the herald then ceased, and was again answered by the shouts of the audience. These were unanimous; for circumstances contributed to convince the malcontent party that they stood at the sovereign's mercy, and the edict that they heard having shown his acquaintance with their guilt, it lay at his pleasure to let loose upon them the strength of the Varangians, while, from the terms on which it had pleased him to receive Tancred, it was probable that the Apulian forces were also at his disposal.

The voices, therefore, of the bulky Stephanos, of Harpax the centurion, and other rebels, both of the camp and city, were the first to thunder forth their gratitude for the clemency of the Emperor, and their thanks to Heaven for his preservation.

The audience, reconciled to the thoughts of the discovered and frustrated conspiracy, began meantime, according to their custom, to turn themselves to the consideration of the matter which had more avowedly called them together, and private whispers, swelling by degrees into murmurs, began to express the dissatisfaction of the citizens at being thus long assembled, without receiving any communication respecting the announced purpose of their meeting.

Alexius was not slow to perceive the tendency of their thoughts; and, on a signal from his hand, the trumpets blew a point of war, in sounds far more lively than those which had prefaced the imperial edict. "Robert Count of Paris," then said a herald, "art thou here in thy place, or by knightly proxy, to answer the challenge brought against thee by his Imperial Highness Nicephorus Briennius, Cæsar of this empire?"

The Emperor conceived himself to have equally provided against the actual appearance at this call of either of the parties named, and had prepared an exhibition of another kind, namely, certain cages, tenanted by wild animals, which, being now loosened, should do their pleasure with each other in the eyes of the assembly. His astonishment

and confusion, therefore, were great when, as the last note of the proclamation died in the echo, Count Robert of Paris stood forth, armed *cap-a-pie*, his mailed charger led behind him from within the curtained inclosure, at one end of the lists, as if ready to mount at the signal of the marshal.

The alarm and the shame that were visible in every countenance near the imperial presence, when no Cæsar came forth in like fashion to confront the formidable Frank, were not of long duration. Hardly had the style and title of the Count of Paris been duly announced by the heralds, and their second summons of his antagonist uttered in due form, when a person, dressed like one of the Varangian Guards, sprung into the lists, and announced himself as ready to do battle in the name and place of the Cæsar Nicephorus Briennius, and for the honor of the empire.

Alexius, with the utmost joy, beheld this unexpected assistance, and readily gave his consent to the bold soldier who stood thus forward in the hour of utmost need to take upon himself the dangerous office of champion. He the more readily acquiesced as, from the size and appearance of the soldier, and the gallant bearing he displayed, he had no doubt of his individual person, and fully confided in his valor.

But Prince Tancred interposed his opposition. "The lists," he said, "were only open to knights and nobles; or, at any rate, men were not permitted to meet therein who were not of some equality of birth and blood; nor could he remain a silent witness where the laws of chivalry were in such respects forgotten."

"Let Count Robert of Paris," said the Varangian, "look upon my countenance, and say whether he has not, by promise, removed all objection to our contest which might be founded upon an inequality of condition, and let him be judge himself whether, by meeting me in this field, he will do more than comply with a compact which he has long since become bound by."

Count Robert, upon this appeal, advanced and acknowledged, without further debate, that, notwithstanding their difference of rank, he held himself bound by his solemn word to give this valiant soldier a meeting in the field; that he regretted, on account of this gallant man's eminent virtues, and the high services he had received at his hands, that they should now stand upon terms of such bloody arbitration; but, since nothing was more common than that the fate of war called on friends to meet each other in mortal

combat, he would not shrink from the engagement he had pledged himself to; nor did he think his quality in the slightest degree infringed or diminished by meeting in battle a warrior so well known and of such good account as Hereward, the brave Varangian. He added, that "he willingly admitted that the combat should take place on foot, and with the battle-ax, which was the ordinary weapon of the Varangian guard."

Hereward had stood still, almost like a statue, while this discourse passed; but when the Count of Paris had made this speech, he inclined himself towards him with a graceful obeisance, and expressed himself honored and gratified by the manly manner in which the Count acquitted himself, according to his promise. with complete honor and fidelity.

"What we are to do," said Count Robert, with a sigh of regret, which even his love of battle could not prevent, "let us do quickly: the heart may be affected, but the hand must do its duty."

Hereward assented, with the additional remark, "Let us then lose no more time, which is already flying fast." And, grasping his ax, he stood prepared for combat.

"I also am ready," said Count Robert of Paris, taking the same weapon from a Varangian soldier, who stood by the lists. Both were immediately upon the alert, nor did further forms or circumstances put off the intended duel.

The first blows were given and parried with great caution, and Prince Tancred and others thought that on the part of Count Robert the caution was much greater than usual; but, in combat as in food, the appetite increases with the exercise. The fiercer passions began, as usual, to awaken with the clash of arms and the sense of deadly blows, some of which were made with great fury on either side, and parried with considerable difficulty and not so completely but what blood flowed on both their parts. The Greeks looked with astonishment on a single combat such as they had seldom witnessed, and held their breath as they beheld the furious blows dealt by either warrior, and expected with each stroke the annihilation of one or other of the combatants. As yet their strength and agility seemed somewhat equally matched, although those who judged with more pretension to knowledge were of opinion that Count Robert spared putting forth some part of the military skill for which he was celebrated; and the remark was generally made and allowed that he had surrendered a great advantage by not insisting upon his right to fight upon horseback. On the

other hand, it was the general opinion that the gallant Varangian omitted to take advantage of one or two opportunities afforded him by the heat of Count Robert's temper, who obviously was incensed at the duration of the combat.

Accident at length seemed about to decide what had been hitherto an equal contest. Count Robert, making a feint on one side of his antagonist, struck him on the other, which was uncovered, with the edge of his weapon, so that the Varangian reeled, and seemed in the act of falling to the earth. The usual sound made by spectators at the sight of any painful or unpleasant circumstance, by drawing the breath between the teeth, was suddenly heard to pass through the assembly, while a female voice loud and eagerly exclaimed—"Count Robert of Paris, forget not this day that thou owest a life to Heaven and me." The Count was in the act of again seconding his blow, with what effect could hardly be judged, when this cry reached his ears, and apparently took away his disposition for farther combat.

"I acknowledge the debt," he said, sinking his battle-ax, and retreating two steps from his antagonist, who stood in astonishment, scarcely recovered from the stunning effect of the blow by which he was so nearly prostrated. He sank the blade of his battle-ax in imitation of his antagonist, and seemed to wait in suspense what was to be the next process of the combat. "I acknowledge my debt," said the valiant Count of Paris, "alike to Bertha of Britain and to the Almighty, who has preserved me from the crime of ungrateful blood-guiltiness. You have seen the fight, gentlemen," turning to Tancred and his chivalry, "and can testify, on your honor, that it has been maintained fairly on both sides, and without advantage on either. I presume my honorable antagonist has by this time satisfied the desire which brought me under his challenge, and which certainly had no taste in it of personal or private quarrel. On my part, I retain towards him such a sense of personal obligation as would render my continuing this combat, unless compelled to it by self-defense, a shameful and sinful action." *

Alexius gladly embraced the terms of truce, which he was far from expecting, and threw down his warder, in signal that the duel was ended. Tancred, though somewhat surprised, and perhaps even scandalized, that a private soldier of the Emperor's guard should have so long resisted the utmost efforts of so approved a knight, could not but own that

* See Chronicle of Lalain. Note 11.

the combat had been fought with perfect fairness and equality, and decided upon terms dishonorable to neither party. The Count's character being well known and established amongst the crusaders, they were compelled to believe that some motive of a most potent nature formed the principle upon which, very contrary to his general practise, he had proposed a cessation of the combat before it was brought to a deadly, or at least to a decisive, conclusion. The edict of the Emperor upon the occasion, therefore, passed into a law, acknowledged by the assent of the chiefs present, and especially affirmed and gratulated by the shouts of the assembled spectators.

But perhaps the most interesting figure in the assembly was that of the bold Varangian, arrived so suddenly at a promotion of military renown which the extreme difficulty he had experienced in keeping his ground against Count Robert had prevented him from anticipating, although his modesty had not diminished the indomitable courage with which he maintained the contest. He stood in the middle of the lists, his face ruddy with the exertion of the combat, and not less so from the modest consciousness proper to the plainness and simplicity of his character, which was disconcerted by finding himself the central point of the gaze of the multitude.

"Speak to me, my soldier," said Alexius, strongly affected by the gratitude which he felt was due to Hereward upon so singular an occasion—"speak to thine Emperor as his superior, for such thou art at this moment, and tell him if there is any manner, even at the expense of half his kingdom, to atone for his own life saved, and, what is yet dearer, for the honor of his country, which thou hast so manfully defended and preserved?"

"My lord," answered Hereward, "your Imperial Highness values my poor services over highly, and ought to attribute them to the noble Count of Paris—first, for his condescending to accept of an antagonist so mean in quality as myself; and next, in generously relinquishing victory when he might have achieved it by an additional blow; for I here confess before your Majesty, my brethren, and the assembled Grecians, that my power of protracting the combat was ended when the gallant Count, by his generosity, put a stop to it."

"Do not thyself that wrong, brave man," said Count Robert; "for I vow to Our Lady of the Broken Lances that the combat was yet within the undetermined doom of Prov-

idence when the pressure of my own feelings rendered me incapable of continuing it, to the necessary harm, perhaps to the mortal damage, of an antagonist to whom I owe so much kindness. Choose, therefore, the recompense which the generosity of thy Emperor offers in a manner so just and grateful, and fear not lest mortal voice pronounces that reward unmerited which Robert of Paris shall avouch with his sword to have been gallantly won upon his own crest."

"You are too great, my lord, and too noble," answered the Anglo-Saxon, "to be gainsaid by such as I am, and I must not awaken new strife between us by contesting the circumstances under which our combat so suddenly closed, nor would it be wise or prudent in me further to contradict you. My noble Emperor generously offers me the right of naming what he calls my recompense; but let not his generosity be dispraised, although it is from you, my lord, and not from his Imperial Highness, that I am to ask a boon, to me the dearest to which my voice can give utterance."

"And that," said the Count, "has reference to Bertha, the faithful attendant of my wife?"

"Even so," said Hereward; "it is my proposal to request my discharge from the Varangian Guard, and permission to share in your lordship's pious and honorable vow for the recovery of Palestine, with liberty to fight under your honored banner, and permission from time to time to recommend my love-suit to Bertha, the attendant of the Countess of Paris, in the hope that it may find favor in the eyes of her noble lord and lady. I may thus finally hope to be restored to a country which I have never ceased to love over the rest of the world."

"Thy service, noble soldier," said the Count, "shall be as acceptable to me as that of a born earl; nor is there an opportunity of acquiring honor which I can shape for thee to which, as it occurs, I will not gladly prefer thee. I will not boast of what interest I have with the King of England, but something I can do with him, and it shall be strained to the uttermost to settle thee in thine own beloved native country."

The Emperor then spoke. "Bear witness, heaven and earth, and you my faithful subjects, and you my gallant allies—above all, you my bold and true Varangian Guard, that we would rather have lost the brightest jewel from our imperial crown than have relinquished the service of this true and faithful Anglo-Saxon. But since go he must and will, it shall be my study to distinguish him by such marks

of beneficence as may make it known through his future life that he is the person to whom the Emperor Alexius Comnenus acknowledged a debt larger than his empire could discharge. You, my Lord Tancred, and your principal leaders, will sup with us this evening, and to-morrow resume your honorable and religious purpose of pilgrimage. We trust both the combatants will also oblige us by their presence. Trumpets, give the signal for dismission."

The trumpets sounded accordingly, and the different classes of spectators, armed and unarmed, broke up into various parties, or formed into their military ranks, for the purpose of their return to the city.

The screams of women, suddenly and strangely raised, were the first thing that arrested the departure of the multitude, when those who glanced their eyes back saw Sylvan, the great ourang-outang, produce himself in the lists, to their surprise and astonishment. The women, and many of the men who were present, unaccustomed to the ghastly look and savage appearance of a creature so extraordinary, raised a yell of terror so loud that it discomposed the animal who was the occasion of its being raised. Sylvan, in the course of the night, having escaped over the garden-wall of Agelastes, and clambered over the rampart of the city, found no difficulty in hiding himself in the lists which were in the act of being raised, having found a lurking-place in some dark corner under the seats of the spectators. From this he was probably dislodged by the tumult of the dispersing multitude, and had been compelled, therefore, to make an appearance in public when he least desired it, not unlike that of the celebrated Puliccinello, at the conclusion of his own drama, when he enters in mortal strife with the Foul Fiend himself—a scene which scarcely excites more terror among the juvenile audience than did the unexpected apparition of Sylvan among the spectators of the duel. Bows were bent and javelins pointed by the braver part of the soldiery against an animal of an appearance so ambiguous, and whom his uncommon size and grizzly look caused most who beheld him to suppose either the Devil himself or the apparition of some fiendish deity of ancient days whom the heathens worshiped. Sylvan had so far improved such opportunities as had been afforded him as to become sufficiently aware that the attitudes assumed by so many military men inferred immediate danger to his person, from which he hastened to shelter himself by flying to the protection of Hereward, with whom he had been in some de-

gree familiarized. He seized him, accordingly, by the cloak, and, by the absurd and alarmed look of his fantastic features, and a certain wild and gibbering chatter, endeavored to express his fear and to ask protection. Hereward understood the terrified creature, and, turning to the Emperor's throne, said aloud—"Poor frightened being, turn thy petition, and gestures, and tones to a quarter which, having to-day pardoned so many offenses which were wilfully and maliciously schemed, will not be, I am sure, obdurate to such as thou, in thy half-reasoning capacity, mayst have been capable of committing."

The creature, as is the nature of its tribe, caught from Hereward himself the mode of applying with most effect his gestures and pitiable supplication, while the Emperor, notwithstanding the serious scene which had just passed, could not help laughing at the touch of comedy flung into it by this last incident.

"My trusty Hereward," he said, "(aside—I will not again call him Edward if I can help it)—thou art the refuge of the distressed, whether it be man or beast, and nothing that sues through thy intercession, while thou remainest in our service, shall find its supplication in vain. Do thou, good Hereward," for the name was now pretty well established in his imperial memory, "and such of thy companions as know the habits of the creature, lead him back to his old quarters in the Blacquernal; and that done, my friend, observe that we request thy company, and that of thy faithful mate Bertha, to partake supper at our court with our wife and daughter, and such of our servants and allies as we shall request to share the same honor. Be assured that, while thou remainest with us, there is no point of dignity which shall not be willingly paid to thee. And do thou approach, Achilles Tatius, as much favored by thine emperor as before this day dawned. What charges are against thee have been only whispered in a friendly ear which remembers them not, unless—which Heaven forefend!—their remembrance is renewed by fresh offenses."

Achilles Tatius bowed till the plume of his helmet mingled with the mane of his fiery horse, but held it wisest to forbear any answer in words, leaving his crime and his pardon to stand upon those general terms in which the Emperor had expressed them.

Once more the mulitude of all ranks returned on their way to the city, nor did any second interruption arrest their march. Sylvan, accompanied by one or two Varangians,

who led him in a sort of captivity, took his way to the vaults of the Blacquernal, which were in fact his proper habitation.

Upon the road to the city, Harpax, the notorious corporal of the Immortal Guards, held a discourse with one or two of his own soldiers, and of the citizens who had been members of the late conspiracy.

"So," said Stephanos, the prize-fighter, "a fine affair we have made of it, to suffer ourselves to be all anticipated and betrayed by a thick-skulled Varangian; every chance turning against us as they would against Corydon, the shoemaker, if he were to defy me to the circus. Ursel, whose death made so much work, turns out not to be dead after all; and, what is worse, he lives not to our advantage. This fellow Hereward, who was yesterday no better than myself —what do I say? better! he was a great deal worse, an insignificant nobody in every respect—is now crammed with honors, praises, and gifts, till he well-nigh returns what they have given him, and the Cæsar and the Acolyte, our associates, have lost the Emperor's love and confidence, and if they are suffered to survive, it must be like the tame domestic poultry, whom we pamper with food one day, that upon the next their necks may be twisted for spit or pot."

"Stephanos," replied the centurion, "thy form of body fits thee well for the *palestra*, but thy mind is not so acutely formed as to detect that which is real from that which is only probable in the political world, of which thou art now judging. Considering the risk incurred by lending a man's ear to a conspiracy, thou oughtest to reckon it a saving in every particular where he escapes with his life and character safe. This has been the case with Achilles Tatius and with the Cæsar. They have remained also in their high places of trust and power, and may be confident that the Emperor will hardly dare to remove them at a future period, since the possession of the full knowledge of their guilt has not emboldened him to do so. Their power, thus left with them, is in fact ours; nor is there a circumstance to be supposed which can induce them to betray their confederates to the government. It is much more likely that they will remember them with the probability of renewing, at a fitter time, the alliance which binds them together. Cheer up thy noble resolution, therefore, my prince of the circus, and think that thou shalt still retain that predominant influence which the favorites of the amphitheater are sure to possess over the citizens of Constantinople."

"I cannot tell," answered Stephanos; "but it gnaws at my heart like the worm that dieth not to see this beggarly foreigner betray the noblest blood in the land, not to mention the best athlete in the *palestra*, and move off not only without punishment for his treachery, but with praise, honor, and preferment."

"True," said Harpax; "but observe, my friend, that he does move off to purpose. He leaves the land, quits the corps in which he might claim preferment and a few vain honors, being valued at what such trifles amount to. Hereward, in the course of one or two days, shall be little better than a disbanded soldier, subsisting by the poor bread which he can obtain as a follower of this beggarly count, or which he is rather bound to dispute with the infidel, by encountering with his battle-ax the Turkish sabers. What will it avail him amidst the disasters, the slaughter, and the famine of Palestine that he once upon a time was admitted to supper with the Emperor? We know Alexius Comnenus: he is willing to discharge, at the highest cost, such obligations as are incurred to men like this Hereward; and, believe me, I think that I see the wily despot shrug his shoulders in derision when one morning he is saluted with the news of a battle in Palestine lost by the crusaders, in which his old acquaintance has fallen a dead man. I will not insult thee by telling thee how easy it might be to acquire the favor of a gentlewoman in awaiting upon a lady of quality; nor do I think it would be difficult, should that be the object of the prize-fighter, to acquire the property of a large baboon like Sylvan, which no doubt would set up as a juggler any Frank who had meanness of spirit to propose to gain his bread in such a capacity from the alms of the starving chivalry of Europe. But he who can stoop to envy the lot of such a person ought not to be one whose chief personal distinctions are sufficient to place him first in rank over all the favorites of the amphitheater."

There was something in this sophistical kind of reasoning which was but half-satisfactory to the obtuse intellect of the prize-fighter, to whom it was addressed, although the only answer which he attempted was couched in this observation—

"Ay, but, noble centurion, you forget that, besides empty honors, this Varangian Hereward, or Edward, whichever is his name, is promised a mighty donative of gold."

"Marry, you touch me there," said the centurion; "and when you tell me that the promise is fulfilled, I will will-

ngly agree that the Anglo-Saxon hath gained something to be envied for; but while it remains in the shape of a naked promise, you shall pardon me, my worthy Stephanos, if I hold it of no more account than the mere pledges which are distributed among ourselves as well as to the Varangians, promising upon future occasions mints of money, which we are likely to receive at the same time with the last year's snow. Keep up your heart, therefore, noble Stephanos, and believe not that your affairs are worse for the miscarriage of this day; and let not thy gallant courage sink, but, remembering those principles upon which it was called into action, believe that thy objects are not the less secure because fate has removed their acquisition to a more distant day." The veteran and unbending conspirator, Harpax, thus strengthened for some future renewal of their enterprise the failing spirits of Stephanos.

After this, such leaders as were included in the invitation given by the Emperor repaired to the evening meal, and, from the general content and complaisance expressed by Alexius and his guests of every description, it could little have been supposed that the day just passed over was one which had inferred a purpose so dangerous and treacherous.

The absence of the Countess Brenhilda during this eventful day created no small surprise to the Emperor and those in his immediate confidence, who knew her enterprising spirit, and the interest she must have felt in the issue of the combat. Bertha had made an early communication to the Count that his lady, agitated with the many anxieties of the few preceding days, was unable to leave her apartment. The valiant knight, therefore, lost no time in acquainting his faithful countess of his safety; and afterwards joining those who partook of the banquet at the palace, he bore himself as if the least recollection did not remain on his mind of the perfidious conduct of the Emperor at the conclusion of the last entertainment. He knew, in truth, that the knights of Prince Tancred not only maintained a strict watch round the house where Brenhilda remained, but also, that they preserved a severe ward in the neighborhood of the Blacquernal, as well for the safety of their heroic leader as for that of Count Robert, the respected companion of their military pilgrimage.

It was the general principle of the European chivalry that distrust was rarely permitted to survive open quarrels, and that whatever was forgiven was dismissed from their recollection, as unlikely to recur; but on the present occasion

there was a more than usual assemblage of troops, which the occurrences of the day had drawn together, so that the crusaders were called upon to be particularly watchful.

It may be believed that the evening passed over without any attempt to renew the ceremonial in the council-chamber of the lions, which had upon a former occasion terminated in such misunderstanding. Indeed, it would have been lucky if the explanation between the mighty Emperor of Greece and the chivalrous knight of Paris had taken place earlier; for reflection on what had passed had convinced the Emperor that the Franks were not a people to be imposed upon by pieces of clockwork and similar trifles, and that what they did not understand was sure, instead of procuring their awe or admiration, to excite their anger and defiance. Nor had it altogether escaped Count Robert that the manners of the Eastern people were upon a different scale from those to which he had been accustomed; that they neither were so deeply affected by the spirit of chivalry nor, in his own language, was the worship of the Lady of the Broken Lances so congenial a subject of adoration. This notwithstanding, Count Robert observed that Alexius Comnenus was a wise and politic prince; his wisdom perhaps too much allied to cunning, but yet aiding him to maintain with great address that empire over the minds of his subjects which were necessary for their good, and for maintaining his own authority. He therefore resolved to receive with equanimity whatever should be offered by the Emperor, either in civility or in the way of jest, and not again to disturb an understanding which might be of advantage to Christendom, by a quarrel founded upon misconception of terms or misapprehension of manners. To this prudent resolution the Count of Paris adhered during the whole evening; with some difficulty, however, since it was somewhat inconsistent with his own fiery and inquisitive temper, which was equally desirous to know the precise amount of whatever was addressed to him, and to take umbrage at it, should it appear in the least degree offensive, whether so intended or not.

CHAPTER XXXIV

It was not until after the conquest of Jerusalem that Count Robert of Paris returned to Constantinople, and, with his wife, and such proportion of his followers as the sword and pestilence had left after that bloody warfare, resumed his course to his native kingdom. Upon reaching Italy, the first care of the noble count and countess was to celebrate in princely style the marriage of Hereward and his faithful Bertha, who had added to their other claims upon their master and mistress those acquired by Hereward's faithful services in Palestine, and no less by Bertha's affectionate ministry to her lady in Constantinople.

As to the fate of Alexius Comnenus, it may be read at large in the history of his daughter Anna, who has represented him as the hero of many a victory, achieved, says the purple-born, in the third chapter and fifteenth book of her history, sometimes by his arms and sometimes by his prudence. "His boldness alone has gained some battles; at other times his success has been won by stratagem. He has erected the most illustrious of his trophies by confronting danger, by combating like a simple soldier, and throwing himself bareheaded into the thickest of the foe. But there are others," continues the accomplished lady, "which he gained an opportunity of erecting by assuming the appearance of terror, and even of retreat. In a word, he knew alike how to triumph either in flight or in pursuit, and remained upright even before those enemies who appeared to have struck him down; resembling the military implement termed the calthrop, which remains always upright in whatever direction it is thrown on the ground."

It would be unjust to deprive the Princess of the defense she herself makes against the obvious charge of partiality.

"I must still once more repel the reproach which some bring against me, as if my history was composed merely according to the dictates of the natural love for parents which is engraved in the hearts of children. In truth, it is not the effect of that affection which I bear to mine, but it is the evidence of matter of fact, which obliges me to speak as I have done. Is it not possible that one can have at the

same time an affection for the memory of a father and for truth? For myself, I have never directed my attempt to write history otherwise than for the ascertainment of the matter of fact. With this purpose, I have taken for my subject the history of a worthy man. Is it just that, by the single accident of his being the author of my birth, his quality of my father ought to form a prejudice against me which would ruin my credit with my readers? I have given, upon other occasions, proofs sufficiently strong of the ardor which I had for the defense of my father's interests, which those that know me can never doubt; but, on the present, I have been limited by the inviolable fidelity with which I respect the truth, which I should have felt conscience to have veiled, under pretense of serving the renown of my father." *

This much we have deemed it our duty to quote, in justice to the fair historian; we will extract also her description of the Emperor's death, and are not unwilling to allow that the character assigned to the Princess by our own Gibbon has in it a great deal of fairness and of truth.

Notwithstanding her repeated protests of sacrificing rather to the exact and absolute truth than to the memory of her deceased parent, Gibbon remarks truly that, "instead of the simplicity of style and narrative which wins our belief, an elaborate affectation of rhetoric and science betrays in every page the vanity of a female author. The genuine character of Alexius is lost in a vague constellation of virtues; and the perpetual strain of panegyric and apology awakens our jealousy to question the veracity of the historian and the merit of the hero. We cannot, however, refuse her judicious and important remark, that the disorders of the times were the misfortune and the glory of Alexius; and that every calamity which can afflict a declining empire was accumulated on his reign by the justice of Heaven and the vices of his predecessors."

The Princess accordingly feels the utmost assurance that a number of signs which appeared in heaven and on earth were interpreted by the soothsayers of the day as foreboding the death of the Emperor. By these means, Anna Comnena assigned to her father those indications of consequence which ancient historians represent as necessary intimations of the sympathy of nature with the removal of great characters from the world; but she fails not to inform the

* *Alexiad*, chap. iii. book xv.

† Gibbon's *Roman Empire*, vol. ix. p. 84.

Christian reader that her father's belief attached to none of these prognostics, and that even on the following remarkable occasion he maintained his incredulity :—A splendid statue, supposed generally to be a relic of paganism, holding in its hand a golden scepter, and standing upon a base of porphyry, was overturned by a tempest, and was generally believed to be an intimation of the death of the Emperor. This, however, he generously repelled. Phidias, he said, and other great sculptors of antiquity, had the talent of imitating the human frame with surprising accuracy; but to suppose that the power of foretelling future events was reposed in these masterpieces of art would be to ascribe to their makers the faculties reserved by the Deity for himself, when he says, "It is I who kill and make alive." During his latter days, the Emperor was greatly afflicted with the gout, the nature of which has exercised the wit of many persons of science as well as of Anna Comnena. The poor patient was so much exhausted that, when the Empress was talking of most eloquent persons who should assist in the composition of his history, he said, with a natural contempt of such vanities, "The passages of my unhappy life call rather for tears and lamentation than for the praises you speak of."

A species of asthma having come to the assistance of the gout, the remedies of the physicians became as vain as the intercession of the monks and clergy, as well as the alms which were indiscriminately lavished. Two or three deep successive swoons gave ominous warning of the approaching blow; and at length was terminated the reign and life of Alexius Comnenus—a prince who, with all the faults which may be imputed to him, still possesses a real right, from the purity of his general intentions, to be accounted one of the best sovereigns of the Lower Empire.

For some time, the historian forgot her pride of literary rank, and, like an ordinary person, burst into tears and shrieks, tore her hair, and defaced her countenance, while the Empress Irene cast from her her princely habits, cut off her hair, changed her purple buskins for black mourning shoes, and her daughter Mary, who had herself been a widow, took a black robe from one of her own wardrobes, and presented it to her mother. "Even in the moment when she put it on," says Anna Comnena, "the Emperor gave up the ghost, and in that moment the sun of my life set."

We shall not pursue her lamentations farther. She upbraids herself that, after the death of her father, that light

of the world, she had also survived Irene, the delight alike of the East and of the West, and survived her husband also. "I am indignant," she said, "that my soul, suffering under such torrents of misfortune, should still deign to animate my body. Have I not," said she, "been more hard and unfeeling than the rocks themselves; and is it not just that one who could survive such a father and mother, and such a husband, should be subjected to the influence of so much calamity? But let me finish this history, rather than any longer fatigue my readers with my unavailing and tragical lamentation."

Having thus concluded her history, she adds the following two lines:—

> The learned Comnena lays her pen aside,
> What time her subject and her father died.*

These quotations will probably give the readers as much as they wish to know of the real character of this imperial historian. Fewer words will suffice to dispose of the other parties who have been selected from her pages, as persons in the foregoing drama.

There is very little doubt that the Count Robert of Paris, whose audacity in seating himself upon the throne of the Emperor gives a peculiar interest to his character, was in fact a person of the highest rank; being no other, as has been conjectured by the learned Ducange, than an ancestor of the house of Bourbon, which has so long given kings to France. He was a successor, it has been conceived, of the Counts of Paris, by whom the city was valiantly defended against the Normans, and an ancestor of Hugh Capet. There are several hypotheses upon this subject, deriving the well-known Hugh Capet, first from the family of Saxony; secondly, from St. Arnoul, afterwards Bishop of Altex [Metz]; third, from Nibilong; fourth, from the Duke of Bavaria; and fifth, from a natural son of the Emperor Charlemagne. Variously placed, but in each of these contested pedigrees, appears this Robert, surnamed the Strong, who was count of that district of which Paris was the capital, most peculiarly styled the County, or Isle, of France. Anna Comnena, who has recorded the bold usurpation of the

* Λῆξεν ὅπου βιότοιο Ἀλέξιος ὁ Κομνηνός
Ἔνθα καλὴ θυγάτηρ λῆξεν Ἀλεξιάδος.

Emperor's seat by this haughty chieftain, has also acquainted us with his receiving a severe, if not a mortal, wound at the battle of Dorylæum, owing to his neglecting the warlike instructions with which her father had favored him on the subject of the Turkish wars. The antiquary who is disposed to investigate this subject may consult the late Lord Ashburnham's elaborate *Genealogy of the Royal House of France;* also a note of Ducange's on the Princess's history, arguing for the identity of her "Robert of Paris, a haughty barbarian," with the "Robert called the Strong," mentioned as an ancestor of Hugh Capet. Gibbon, vol. xi. p. 49, may also be consulted. The French antiquary and the English historian seem alike disposed to find the church called in the tale that of the Lady of the Broken Lances in that dedicated to St. Drausus, or Drosin, of Soissons, who was supposed to have peculiar influence on the issue of combats, and to be in the habit of determining them in favor of such champions as spent the night preceding at his shrine.

In consideration of the sex of one of the parties concerned, the Author has selected Our Lady of the Broken Lances as a more appropriate patroness than St. Drausus himself for the amazons, who were not uncommon in that age. Gaita, for example, the wife of Robert Guiscard, a redoubted hero, and the parent of a most heroic race of sons, was herself an amazon, fought in the foremost ranks of the Normans, and is repeatedly commemorated by our imperial historian, Anna Comnena.

The reader can easily conceive to himself that Robert of Paris distinguished himself among his brethren-at-arms and fellow-crusaders. His fame resounded from the walls of Antioch; but, at the battle of Dorylæum, he was so desperately wounded as to be disabled from taking a part in the grandest scene of the expedition. His heroic countess, however, enjoyed the great satisfaction of mounting the walls of Jerusalem, and in so far discharging her own vows and those of her husband. This was the more fortunate, as the sentence of the physicians pronounced that the wounds of the Count had been inflicted by a poisoned weapon, and that complete recovery was only to be hoped for by having recourse to his native air. After some time spent in the vain hope of averting by patience this unpleasant alternative, Count Robert subjected himself to necessity, or what was represented as such, and, with his wife and the faithful Hereward, and all others of his followers who had been like himself disabled from combat, took the way to Europe by sea.

A light galley, procured at a high rate, conducted them safely to Venice, and from that then glorious city the moderate portion of spoil which had fallen to the Count's share among the conquerors of Palestine served to convey them to his own dominions, which, more fortunate than those of most of his fellow-pilgrims, had been left uninjured by their neighbors during the time of their proprietor's absence on the Crusade. The report that the Count had lost his health, and the power of continuing his homage to the Lady of the Broken Lances, brought upon him the hostilities of one or two ambitious or envious neighbors, whose covetousness was, however, sufficiently repressed by the brave resistance of the Countess and the resolute Hereward. Less than a twelvemonth was required to restore the Count of Paris to his full health, and to render him, as formerly, the assured protector of his own vassals and the subject in whom the possessors of the French throne reposed the utmost confidence. This latter capacity enabled Count Robert to discharge his debt towards Hereward in a manner as ample as he could have hoped or expected. Being now respected alike for his wisdom and his sagacity, as much as he always was for his intrepidity and his character as a successful crusader, he was repeatedly employed by the court of France in settling the troublesome and intricate affairs in which the Norman possessions of the English crown involved the rival nations. William Rufus was not insensible to his merit, nor blind to the importance of gaining his good-will; and finding out his anxiety that Hereward should be restored to the land of his fathers, he took, or made, an opportunity, by the forfeiture of some rebellious noble, of conferring upon our Varangian a large district adjacent to the New Forest, being part of the scenes which his father chiefly frequented, and where it is said the descendants of the valiant squire and his Bertha have subsisted for many a long year, surviving turns of time and chance, which are in general fatal to the continuance of more distinguished families.

NOTES TO COUNT ROBERT OF PARIS

NOTE 1.—BOHEMOND OF ANTIOCH, p. 5.

BOHEMOND, son of Robert Guiscard, the Norman conqueror of Apulia, Calabria, and Sicily, was, at the time when the first crusade began, Count of Tarentum. Though far advanced in life, he eagerly joined the expedition of the Latins, and became Prince of Antioch. For details of his adventures, death, and extraordinary character, see Gibbon, chaps. lviii., lix., and Mills's *History of the Crusades*, vol. i.

NOTE 2.—CONSTANTINOPLE, p. 9.

The impression which the imperial city was calculated to make on such visitors as the crusaders of the West is given by the ancient French chronicler Villehardouin, who was present at the capture of 1203.

"When we had come," he says, "within three leagues, to a certain abbey, there we could plainly survey Constantinople. There the ships and the galleys came to anchor; and much did they who had never been in that quarter before gaze upon the city. That such a city could be in the world they had never conceived, and they were never weary of staring at the high walls and towers with which it was entirely encompassed, the rich palaces and lofty churches, of which there were so many that no one could have believed it, if he had not seen with his own eyes that city, the queen of all cities. And know that there was not so bold a heart there, that it did not feel some terror at the strength of Constantinople."—Chap. lxvi.

Again, "And now many of those of the host went to see Constantinople within, and the rich palaces and stately churches of which it possesses so many, and the riches of the place, which are such as no other city ever equalled. I need not speak of the sanctuaries, which are as many as are in all the world beside."—Chap. c.

NOTE 3.—VARANGIAN GUARD, p. 13.

Ducange has poured forth a tide of learning on this curious subject, which will be found in his notes on Villehardouin's *Constantinople under the French Emperors*. Paris, 1657, folio, p. 296. Gibbon's *History* may also be consulted, vol. x. p. 221. Villehardouin, in describing the siege of Constantinople, 1203, says, "Li murs fu mult garnis d'Anglois et de Danois;" hence the dissertation of Ducange here quoted, and several articles besides in his Glossarium, as "Varangi," "Warengangi," etc. The etymology of the name * is left uncertain, though the German *fortganger*, *i.e.* "forth-goer," "wanderer," "exile," seems the most probable. The term occurs in various Italian and Sicilian documents, anterior to the establishment of the Varangian Guards at Constantinople, and collected by Muratori: as, for instance, in an edict of one of the Lombard kings—

"Omnes Warengangi, qui de exteris finibus in regni nostri finibus advenerint, seque sub scuto potestatis nostræ subdiderint, legibus nostris Longobardorum vivere debeant" [vol. i. p. 48]; and in another, "De Warengangis nobilibus, mediocribus, et rusticis hominibus, qui usque nunc in terrâ vestrâ fugiti sunt, habeatis eos."—*Muratori*, vol. ii. p. 261.

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* [Munch *Det Norske Folks Historie*, i. (1), p. 288, note 2, derives it from old Norse *var*, Anglo-Saxon *vær*, meaning "those bound together by an oath." It is without doubt connected with the Old Norse *verja*, Modern Swedish *varja*, German *vehren*, meaning "to defend," "protect." The name does not indicate any nationality, but is in Russian and Norse annals applied equally to all Scandinavians who went, mostly through Russia, to Myklegaard (the Great City), as they called Constantinople, to serve the Greek emperor.]

With regard to the origin of the Varangian Guard, the most distinct testimony is that of Ordericus Vitalis, who says :—

When, therefore, the English had lost their liberty, they turned themselves with zeal to discover the means of throwing off the unaccustomed yoke. Some fled to Sueno, King of the Danes, to excite him to the recovery of the inheritance of his grandfather, Canute. Not a few fled into exile in other regions, either from the mere desire of escaping from under the Norman rule, or in the hope of acquiring wealth, and so being one day in a condition to renew the struggle at home. Some of these, in the bloom of youth, penetrated into a far distant land, and offered themselves to the military service of the Constantinopolitan Emperor—that wise prince, against whom Robert Guiscard, Duke of Apulia, had then raised all his forces. . . . The English exiles were favorably received, and opposed in battle to the Normans, for whose encounter the Greeks themselves were too weak. Alexius began to build a town for the English, a little above Constantinople, at a place called Chevetot, but the trouble of the Normans from Sicily still increasing, he soon recalled them to the capital, and entrusted the principal palace with all its treasures to their keeping. This was the method in which the Saxon English found their way to Ionia, where they still remain, highly valued by the Emperor and the people.—Book iv.

Note 4.—Immortals, p. 55.

The Ἀθάνατοι, or Immortals, of the army of Constantinople were a select body, so named in imitation of the ancient Persians. They were first embodied, according to Ducange, by Michael Ducas.

Note 5.—King of France, p. 74.

Ducange pours out a whole ocean of authorities to show that the king of France was in those days styled *rex*, by way of eminence. See his notes on *The Alexiad.* Anna Comnena in her history makes Hugh of Vermandois assume to himself the titles which could only, in the most enthusiastic Frenchman's opinion, have been claimed by his elder brother, the reigning monarch.

Note 6.—Labarum, p. 118.

Ducange, fills half a column of his huge page with the mere names of the authors who have written at length on the Labarum, or principal standard of the empire for the time of Constantine. It consisted of a spear of silver, or plated with that metal, having suspended from a cross beam below the spoke a small square silken banner adorned with portraits of the reigning family, and over these the famous monogram which expresses at once the figure of the cross and the initial letters of the name of Christ. The bearer of the Labarum was an officer of high rank down to the last days of the Byzantine government.—See Gibbon, chap. xx.

Ducange seems to have proved, from the evidence of coins and triumphal monuments, that a standard of the form of the Labarum was used by various barbarous nations long before it was adopted by their Roman conquerors, and he is of opinion that its name also was borrowed from either Teutonic Germany, or Celtic Gaul, or Sclavonic Illyria. It is certain that either the German language or the Welsh may afford at this day a perfectly satisfactory etymon, *lapheer* [*lappenheer*] in the former, and *labhair* in the latter, having precisely the same meaning —"the cloth of the host."

The form of the Labarum may still be recognized in the banners carried in ecclesiastical processions, in all Roman Catholic countries.

Note 7.—Gaita, p. 127.

This amazon makes a conspicuous figure in Anna Comnena's account of her father's campaigns against Robert Guiscard. On one occasion (*Alexiad*, lib. iv. p. 93), she represents her as thus recalling the fugitive soldiery of her husband to their duty—' Ἡ δέ γέ Γαῖτα . . . Παλλὰς ἄλλη, κἂν μὴ Ἀθήνη . . . κατ' αὐτῶν μεγίστην ἀφιεῖσα φωνήν, μονονοὺ τὸ Ὁμηρικὸν ἔπος τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ λέγειν ἐώκει 'μέχρι πόσου φέυξεσθε ; στῆτε, ἀνέρες ἔστε. ὡς δὲ ἔτι φεύγοντας τούτους ἑώρα, δόρυ μακρὸν ἐναγκαλισαμένη, ὅλους ρυτῆρας ἐνδοῦσα κατὰ τῶν φευγόντων ἴεται.— That is, exhorting them, in all but Homeric language, at the top of her voice ; and when this failed, brandishing a long spear, and rushing upon the fugitives at the utmost speed of her horse. This heroic lady, according to the *chronique scandaleuse* of those

days, was afterwards deluded by some cunning overtures of the Greek Emperor, and poisoned her husband in expectation of gaining a place on the throne of Constantinople. Ducange, however, rejects the story, and so does Gibbon.

NOTE 8.—COUNT OF THOLOUSE, p. 166.

Raymond Count of Tholouse and St. Giles, Duke of Narbonne, and Marquis of Provence, an aged warrior who had won high distinction in the contests against the Saracens in Spain, was the chief leader of the crusaders from the South of France. His title of St. Giles is corrupted by Anna Comnena into Sangeles, by which name she constantly mentions him in *The Alexiad.*

NOTE 9.—CRUSADERS' PUNISHMENT, p. 274.

Persons among the crusaders found guilty of certain offences did penance in a dress of tar and feathers, though it is supposed a punishment of modern invention.

NOTE 10.—LATIN QUOTATIONS, p. 286.

The lines of Juvenal imitated by Johnson in his *London*—

All sciences a fasting Monsieur knows;
And bid him go to Hell—to Hell he goes.

"Do thou cultivate justice: for thee and for others there remains an avenger."
—Ovid, *Met.*

NOTE 11.—CHRONICLE OF LALAIN, p. 370.

In the Diary of Sir Walter Scott (19th February 1826) he writes:—"Being troubled with thick-coming fancies, and a slight palpitation of the heart, I have been reading the Chronicle of the Good Knight Messire Jacques de Lalain—curious, but dull, from the constant repetition of the same species of combats in the same style and phrase. It is like washing bushels of sand for a grain of gold. . . . Still, things occur to one. Something might be made out of . . . a tale of chivalry, taken from the passage of arms which Jacques de Lalain maintained for the first day of every month for a twelvemonth." And in a footnote Mr. Lockhart says, "This hint was taken up in *Count Robert of Paris.*"

A brief notice of the heroic knight-errant referred to may, therefore, not be considered out of place here.

The *Chronique du Bon Chevalier Messire Jacques de Lalain, Frère et Compagnon de l' Ordre de la Toison d'Or*, attributed to Messire Georges Chastellain, forms vol. xxi. of the *Collection des Chroniques Nationales Françaises*, published by J. A. Buchon, of which there is a set in the Abbotsford Library. In a previous edition of this work, published at Bruxelles, 1634, small 4to, it is called "Histoire," in place of "Chronique," and has a small portrait of the *Bon Chevalier* with the collar of the Golden Fleece, carefully engraved, evidently from an original miniature painting. It may be added that this work was translated into French verse, and amplified, by a Flemish knight, Messire Jean d'Ennetières, Sieur de Beaumetz. It was published at Tournay in 1633, with the title, *Le Chevalier sans Reproche, Jacques de Lalain*; and is divided into sixteen books, with an engraved design to each. Had Sir Walter set himself to read this version he might have well described it as insufferably dull. The circumstance, however, that gives a special interest to this work is the portion that relates to Scotland in the reign of James the Second.

The *Nouvelle Biographie Générale* contains a long article, "LALAIN OU LALAING (Jacques, dit Jacquet de), surnommé le Bon Chevalier," from which it appears that he was born about 1422, and when sixteen years of age was sent to the court of Adolphus Duke of Cleves; he afterwards continued to signalize himself by his exploits as the representative of a knight-errant. His biographer remarks that, on the first point of view of his historical career, "Ce personnage, on le voit, n'offre qu'un intérêt médiocre. Mais il n'en est pas de même si on le considère au point de vue des mœurs du temps. Jacques de Lalain nous offre en effet la personification d'un type aussi curieux qu'intéressant. Il fut un des derniers représentants de l'idéal chevaleresque. L'imagination s'attache avec sympathie au destin de ce personnage, exalté jusqu'à l'héroïsme par la foi qui l'anime."

The chapters in the French Chronicle that relate to Scotland are very curious but are too long to be quoted. Jacques de Lalain, hearing of the prowess of Sir James of Douglas, sent a letter of challenge by a herald to Scotland, dated July 1448. The reply, accepting the challenge, is dated at Edinburgh, 24th September, 1448. He accordingly arrived in Scotland in the beginning of 1449, and the tournament took place during the time of Lent, at Stirling, in the presence of the Scottish king and the nobility, and a great concourse of people. To quote the words of a well-known historian *—"Two Burgundians of the noble house of Lalain, and a third styled the squire Melyades, challenged two of the Douglases, and Halket, to fight with the lance, battle-ax, sword, and dagger. After a festival of some days, the combatants entered the lists, clothed in velvet, and proceeded to their pavilions to arm; the Earl of Douglas himself, attended by not less than about five thousand followers, accompanying the Scottish champions. After having been solemnly knighted by the King, the parties engaged; the spears were soon thrown away; one of the Douglases was felled by a battle-ax, and the combat becoming unequal, the King threw down his baton, the signal of its termination."

At a chapter of the order of the Golden Fleece, the 4th of May, 1451, Jacques de Lalain was elected a knight of that distinguished order; but was slain by a cannon-ball at the siege of the Château de Poucques, 4th July, 1453, aged thirty-two (*Laing*).

* Pinkerton's *History* [*of Scotland*], vol. i. p. 207 [1797].

GLOSSARY

OF

WORDS, PHRASES, AND ALLUSIONS

Abydos, a town on the Asiatic side of the Hellespont or Dardanelles
Abye, to pay for, atone for
Achitophel, the counsellor of King David
Agamemnon, commander of the Greeks in the Trojan War
Alexandrian library, the greatest collection of books in the ancient Greek world, was preserved at Alexandria in Egypt, and burnt in 640 by the Arab conqueror, Amr ibn al-As
Aliquando dormitat Homerus, Homer is caught napping sometimes
All' erta! all' erta, etc. (p. 273), Look out! look out! Here's booty!
Altex (p. 382), evidently Metz, of which see Arnulf was bishop
Ambidexter, doublehanded; double-dealing
Androcles and the Lion, the story of the Roman slave who removed a thorn from the paw of a wild lion, and afterwards was recognized by it when cast into the arena to be torn to pieces by wild animals
Antoninus. See Marcus Aurelius Antoninus
Anubis, a god of the ancient Egyptians, usually represented with a jackal's head
Apelles, the most celebrated painter of ancient Greece, lived in the 4th century
Apis, an ancient Egyptian deity, worshipped in the form of a bull
Arblast, a cross-bow
Argive, Greek
Argus's tail, eyes of. After the death of Argus, his hundred eyes were placed in the tail of the peacock
Armipotent, mighty in arms, an epithet of Mars, the Roman god of war
Astucious, astute, crafty
Atmeidan, a circus, exercise ring
Attaint, a successful hit, stroke

Ballantynian ordeal, printing. Scott's novels were first printed by the brothers John and James Ballantyne
Bel, a Babylonian god, corresponding to the Canaanite god Baal
Besant, or *Byzant*, a gold coin = 10s. to 20s
Bevis of Hampton, the hero of a mediæval romance
Black Douglas, or *Good Sir James of Douglas*, the loyal supporter of Robert Bruce, called Black from his swarthy complexion
Bœotia, a district of ancient Greece, the inhabitants of which were proverbial for their rude and unsociable manners
Bona Dea, peculiarly the goddess of women amongst the ancient Romans
Bradamante, a female warrior in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*
Bruited, noised abroad
Brutus, elder, the hero who, in the legendary history of Rome, feigned idiocy to escape the tyranny of Tarquin the Proud

Caccabulum, a small cooking-pot; (p. 253) a clean dish
Caliph, the head of the Mohammedan world, both politically and religiously
Calthrop, four iron spikes fixed into a ball in such a way that, when any three rest on the ground, the fourth projects upwards; this instrument was put down where cavalry were expected to charge
Cap-à-pie, from head to foot
Cathedral clock. Striking clocks are known to have existed in the 12th century; the earliest forerunner of modern clocks is believed to have been invented in the 9th century
Cleonice, the Byzantine maiden stabbed by mistake by Pausanias the Spartan
Clovis, king of the Franks, adopted Christianity in 496
Comus, in ancient Greek mythology, the god of revelry
Constantinople, was inaugurated as the new capital of the Roman Empire in 330
Contra omnes mortales, against all men
Corps de garde, the guard
Corynetes, the surname of Periphetes, a robber of Epidaurus in Greece,

who slew travelers with an iron club

Crown, parsley. *See* Parsley crown

Cumans, or *Comans*, Turkish tribes settled in what is now Moldavia and southwest Russia

Cybele, the great mother, an ancient goddess of Asia Minor

Cydnus, a river in the south of Asia Minor

Cytherea, a name of Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love; *Cytherean*, dedicated to Aphrodite (Venus)

Cytheros, one of the Ionian islands, anciently sacred to Aphrodite

Daidling-bit, a path for dawdling, sauntering on

Damascus, Gate of (p. 16). *See* Genie and the prince

Dan, a title of familiarity used by some old English writers

Davus sum, non Œdipus, I am a simple man, not a guesser of riddles

"*Did I but purpose*," etc. (p. x), from the poem *Henry and Emma*

Diogenes, lantern of. *See* Lantern of Diogenes

Diomedes, king of the Bistones, used to feed four savage horses with the bodies of all strangers he caught in his country, until he was slain by Hercules

Dionysius, ear of (p. 207). *See Fortunes of Nigel*, p. 391

Doited, stupid

Dorylæum, in Phrygia, Asia Minor; there in 1097 the Crusaders defeated the Seljuk Turks led by their sultan Soliman

Draco, an Athenian lawgiver of the 7th century B.C., whose laws were of unusual severity

Drinc hael, drink health

Dromond, a large transport vessel

Ducange, Charles Dufresne, Sieur du Cange, an erudite French scholar of the 17th century

En brut, in the rough, unpolished

En champ clos, in the lists, the ground enclosed for a tournament

Etymon, the root or original form of a word

Eumenides, the Furies, monsters of terror, in ancient Greek mythology

Evoe, evoe, exclamations used by the worshippers of Bacchus

Ex preposito, of express purpose

Faitour, an evil-doer, scoundrel

Felucca, a narrow open boat with two lateen sails, used in the Mediterranean

Fetterbolt, presumbly *fetterlock*, a shackle

Fleurs-de-lis semées, scattered lilies, a heraldic term

Fortganger (in Modern High German only a philological, not an actual form), from *fortgang*, "going forth," "progress"

Four hours, a light repast taken between dinner and supper, generally at four o'clock

Franklin, a yeoman, small landowner

Gaed, went

Gaitling, an infant, child

Gambaud, or *Gambade*, a leap, spring

Gay, John, English poet, author of *The Beggar's Opera* (1728)

Genie and the Prince, (p. 16), an allusion to *The Arabian Nights*, "Nour-eddin Ali and Bedreddin Hassan"

Goddess-born, Achilles, son of the goddess Thetis

Gossipred, the relationship of sponsor and god-child

"*Grammaticus, rhetor*," etc. (p. 288). Grammarian, rhetorician, geometer, painter, manager of a wrestling-school, interpreter of omens, rope-dancer, physician, sage, he knew everything. A hungry, paltry Greek, he will go to heaven if you bid him do so

Gusedub, means the geese's puddle

Gymnosophist, an ancient Hindu philosopher and ascetic

Hero and Leander. Leander swam every night across the Hellespont, to visit Hero, guided by the light of her lamp, until, the lamp being extinguished one stormy night, Leander perished in the waves

Hiatus valde deflendi, gaps to be greatly deplored

Hussain, Prince. *See* Prince Hussian's tapestry

Ichor, a fluid that in the gods corresponded to the blood of human bodies

Ides of March, the 15th of March

Idumeans, or *Idumœans*, a people belonging to a district in the south of Palestine

Infinitus est numerus stultorum, the number of fools is infinite

Isthmian games, one of the four great athletic festivals of ancient Greece, were held every two years on the Isthmus of Corinth

Joinville, Sieur de, wrote a Life of Louis IX., who conducted a crusade in 1248-54

Ken, know

Kittle turn, a hard sentence, difficulty

Lantern of Diogenes, (p. 214), an allusion to the cynical philosopher Diogenes, who, being asked why he went about with a lighted lantern in broad daylight, replied, that he was seeking for an honest man

Lapheer, correctly a compound of the Low German *lappen*, "cloth," and the High German *heer*, "a host"

Lave, the remainder, rest

Lelies, the descriptive name given to the Arab shout of onset, *La ilaha illa 'llah*

Lemnos, an island in the Ægean Sea, about 40 miles from the Dardanelles

"*Les Anglois*," etc. (p. 66), the English and Danes fought much with battle-axes

Licet exire, permission to leave the room
Lingua franca, a corrupt language employed as a common medium of intercourse
Loretto, Our Lady's house of (p. 207), was, according to the legend, transported in the 13th century from Nazareth to Dalmatia, and thence in a single night to Italy
Luster, a period of five years
Lycurgus, the great lawgiver of the ancient Spartans

Macaroni, a fop, beau of the 18th century
Manchester railroad (p. x). The Manchester and Liverpool Railway was opened in 1830, the year before the Introduction to this novel was written
Manichœans (p. 6), adherents of an ancient religious system, only in part Christian, wnich originated in Western Asia in the 3d century. They assisted Alexius against the Normans in 1081
Marcus (Aurelius) Antoninus, Roman emperor in the 2d century, renowned as a noble-minded heathen philosopher
Marphisa, a female warrior in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*
Maud, a shepherd's gray woolen plaid
Menelaus. See Homer's *Iliad*, Bk. xvii.
Michael Ducas, emperor of Constantinople from 1071 to 1078
Militat omnis amans,' etc. (p. 221), every lover is a man-at-arms, and even Cupid has his camp
Mitylene, or *Mytilene*, also called *Lesbos*, an island off the west coast of Asia Minor
Mount Pisgah, the mountain, east of the Jordan, from which Moses viewed the Promised Land of Israel
Muckle, much
Muratori Lodovico Antonio, Italian antiquary and historian, lived 1672 to 1750. He published a famous collection of Italian chronicles from the 5th to the 16th century
Musis severioribus, to graver and more arduous studies

Naxos, an island in the Ægean Sea, celebrated for its great fertility
Nibilong, probably the ancestor of the Burgundian tribe of the Nibelungen or Niflungen
Nicanor (p. 27). The Greek word "nike" means "victory"
Nicotian weed, tobacco
Niddering, or *nithing*, a worthless person, stamping a man as an outcast and utterly vile

Oboli, or *obol*, a coin of ancient Greece=1-2 d.
Odin, the supreme god of the ancient Scandinavians. *Compare The Pirate*, Note 30, p. 462
Œstrum, torment, prick
Ofelli, a reference to an unpolished but upright countryman in Horace, *Satires*, ii. 2
Omnium augustissimus, the most august or illustrious of all
Ordericus Vitalis, a Norman historian of the 11th century
Palestra, or *palæstra*, the arena where boxing and other athletic games were carried on
Pancration, an athletic contest which involved both wrestling and boxing
Panhypersebastos, the most august of the august
Par amours, unlawfully, illicitly
Parcel, in part, partly
Parsley crown (p. 16), a prize for athletic skill; such were the prizes given at the Isthmian games
Patroclus. See Homer's *Iliad*, Bk. xvii.
Paulicians (p. 6), a religious sect who originated in Armenia in the 7th century; their doctrines were partly Christian, partly Manichæan. They assisted Alexius against the Normans in 1081
Pelides, the son of Peleus, *i. e.* Achilles; his mother was the goddess Thetis
Penthesilea, queen of the Amazons, who fought against the Greeks at Troy
Periapt, a charm, talisman
Perpending, weighing, considering
Phidias, the greatest sculptor of ancient Greece, in the 5th century B. C.
Phryne, a famous courtezan of ancient Greece, a woman of marvelous beauty
Pistrinum, a corn-mill worked by an ass or horse; slaves were sometimes harnessed to it as a mode of punishment
Pitcairne, Dr., a celebrated doctor and writer of Latin verse, of Edinburgh (1752-1813)
Porphyrogenita, born in the purple, *i. e.* of imperial birth
Prætor, a class of ancient Roman magistrates
Prætorian Bands, the imperial guards or household troops of the ancient Roman Empire
Praxiteles, one of the greatest sculptors of ancient Greece, lived in the 4th century B. C.
Prefect, or *præfect*, the title of various high officers in ancient Rome
Prerupt, abrupt, sudden
Prince and genie (p. 16). *See* Genie and the prince
Prince Houssain's tapestry. See Arabian Nights, "Prince Ahmed"
Prior's heroine (p. x), Emma in the poem *Henry and Emma*
Procopius, the principal of the Byzantine historians, lived during the 6th century
Procrustes, the surname of an ancient Greek robber, who forced his victim to lie down on a bed which was either too short or too long, and then stretched or cut him until his body exactly fitted
Prometheus, a demi-god, according to one legend, created men out of earth and water
"*Propago contemptrix*," etc. (p. 336), truly a godless generation, very greedy of slaughter and full of violence; mis-

quoted from Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, i. 160
Propontis, the Sea of Marmora
Protosebastos, the fifth person in rank in the Eastern Roman Empire, the Emperor being the first, the Sebastocrator the second, the Cæsar the third
Pulcheria, Empress, sister of Theodosius, whom she succeeded in 450
Pulicinello, or *Punchinello*, a puppet, the prototype of Punch ; also a typical comic character in early Italian comedy
Punctiuncula, trifling points, small matters

Questor, a class of ancient Roman magistrates
Quidnunc, one who knows or pretends to know all the news of the day
Quirites, a general name for the citizens of ancient Rome

Regis ad exemplum, after the king's example
Res tuas agas, attend to your own business
Robert of Apulia, known more commonly as Robert Guiscard
Rodomont, a commander in the Saracen army that fought against Charlemagne, in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*
Saale (p. 133), should obviously be *Meuse*, along which river and the Rhine the Franks (*see* p. 162) were for a long period settled. Charlemagne was a Frank, and was born at Aix-la-Chapelle, which is not far distant from the Meuse
Sabine vintage. *See* Horace, *Odes*, Bk. I. xx. 1
Sae, so
St. Anthony, in the 3d century, spent nearly twenty years as a solitary anchorite in a desert in Egypt
St. Arnoul, or *Arnulf*, bishop of Metz, and founder of the Carolingian dynasty of the kings of France
Sair Lift, a sore or heavy burden, task
Sanctum sanctorum, the most private of all apartments
Schaw, or *show*, to indicate, reveal, show
Scyrons, the inhabitants of Scyro, one of the Ægean islands, notorious for their piracies
Sebastocrator, the second person in rank in the Greek Empire. *See* p. 217 ; and, for the history of the title, and its relation to the title Cæsar, Gibbon, chap. liii.
Sebastos, august
Semee, strewn, sown
Sequin, a gold coin worth about 9s. 6d.
Sestos, a town on the European side of the Hellespont or Dardanelles
Sibyl. *See* Tivoli
Sicarius, a stabber, assassin
Stadia, a Greek measure of distance—200 yards
Stummed (wine), unfermented
Sub crimine falsi, under the penalty of being esteemed faithless
Susurrus, whisper, rumor
Sylvan, a faun, woodland diety, creature of the woods

Tales of the Genii, or the delightful Lessons of Horam, the Son of Asmar, by Sir Charles Morell (James Ridley), 1765
Tanquam deus ex machina, like a god stepping down from the (theatrical) car (or other contrivance)
Taprobana, some island or country in the south-east of Asia ; sometimes identified with Ceylon
Taranis, the supreme god of the Druids, the priests of the ancient Britons
Tasso has preferred (p. 360). Tancred is the hero of the *Gerusalemme Liberata* of the Italian poet Tasso
Tecbir, the Arab shout of onset
Thalestris, queen of the Amazons in the time of Alexander the Great
Theme, a province or division of the Byzantine empire
Thetis, son of, Achilles
Tivoli, the modern Tibur, not many miles from Rome ; there, beside a waterfall, stood a temple to the ancient prophetess, the Sibyl
Τὸν ἐμοῦ Καίσαρα, my emperor, my beloved
Topped his part (p. 173), done his part with zeal and success. Gay's lines (*Squire and Cur*) exactly hit off Agelastes—" That politician tops his part Who readily can lie with art "
Tranchefer, cleaver of iron, the name of Count Robert's sword
Trimalchio's banquet, described in the fragmentary *Satiræ* of the Roman writer Petronius Arbiter
Trinculo, the jester in Shakespeare's *Tempest*
" *Tu cole justiciam*," etc. (p. 288), Do thou cultivate justice, there will come an avenger for thee and for others

Ultimus atque optimus, the last and best
Ultimus labor, the last work.
Ultramontane, beyond the mountains—that is, north of the Alps

Varangian, the name of a class of Norse adventurers or soldiers. There is no language known by this name. The Varangians spoke Old Norse. Saxon, or rather Anglo-Saxon is intended on p. 44. See further footnote, p. 389.
Vavasour, a principal vassal, great lord
" *Veiller y vont*," etc. (p. xxvi), thither come to keep vigil such pilgrims as desire to engage in single combat
Vere Sapiens, the truly wise man
Vicit Leo ex tribu Judæ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah (*i. e.* Christ) hath conquered
Villehardouin, Geoffroi, de, a French chronicler of the 12th century
Vulnerary, relating to wounds

Waes hael, Kaisar, etc. (p. 43), Good health to thee, gracious and mighty emperor. For *mirrig* read *mirige*, and for *machtigh*, read *miehtig* or *mihtig*
Water (up the), valley

Windlestraw, a stalk of grass

Xantippe, the shrewish wife of the philosopher Socrates

York, Duke of his reformation of the army (p. 25). Frederick Augustus, second son of George III., was commander-in-chief of the English army from 1798 to 1809, and effected many useful reforms

Zoe kai psyche, life and soul

Zoroaster the founder of the ancient religion of the fire-worshipping Parsees

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